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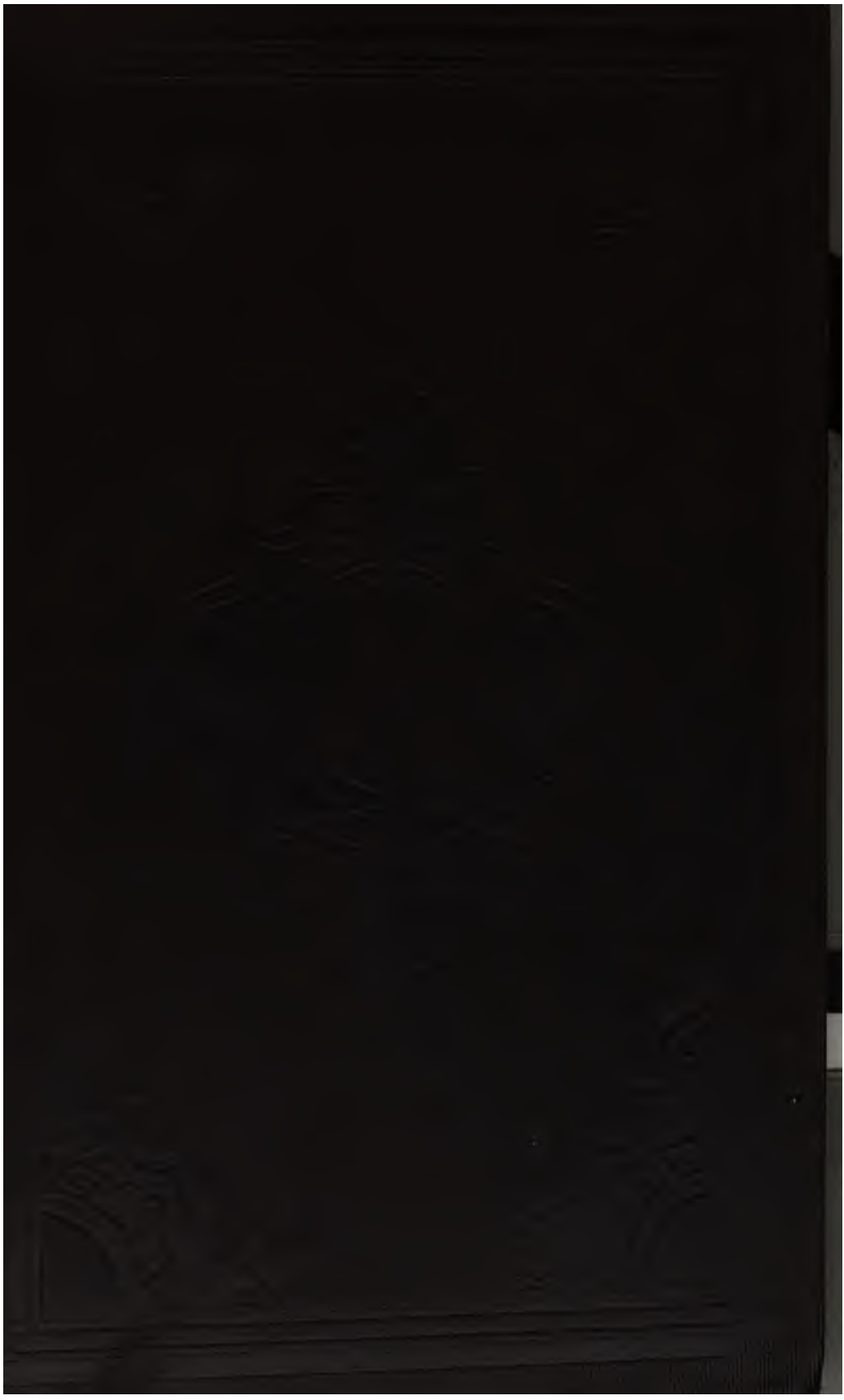

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I am, dear Brethren and Friends,
Your faithful and grateful Servant in the Truth,
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"Whom God did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son: moreover whom he did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them he also glorified."

ROM. viii. 29, 30.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

"CALVIN'S CALVINISM."—This definitive title is prefixed to the present publications advisedly, and purposely; as embodying, in its expression, the *nature* of the original works of the immortal Genevese Reformer, and also the *object* of their present Translation. The originals are Calvin's testimony, and real mind, concerning the doctrines of God's electing, predestinating, and sovereign grace; while his own exposition and expression of his faith therein, satisfactorily evince, and beautifully manifest, the spirit in which he held and taught those Divine and sublime doctrines.

No servant of Christ, probably, since the days of the apostles, and of the Gospel witnesses of their century, has been more grossly misrepresented, or more maliciously maligned, than the faithful, fearless, and beloved Calvin. But the British Church of Christ shall now, (the Translator intends, under the Divine blessing,) see, and love, and admire, while the whole nation shall know, what the heavenly JOHN CALVIN really was, in his ministry, and is still, and ever will be, in his writings, as long as the originals shall survive the desolations of time.

The present and (D.V.) forthcoming TREATISES, derive a considerable accession of value and interest, from the fact, that they are the *only* productions of Calvin, which he devoted, expressly, exclusively, and purposely, to the

exposition and defence of the sublime doctrines of electing, predestinating, and persevering grace. Those glorious truths are indeed, as a matter of natural consequence, interwoven with the whole of his written and voluminous labors: which consist principally of commentaries on most, or nearly all, the Books of the Holy Scriptures. But the Two TREATISES, now under publication, are devoted wholly, by the pre-eminent Reformer, to the statement and vindication of those all-high doctrines, which formed the burden of his faith, testimony, confession, and ministry; and as such, they are signally interesting, and valuable.

There are, in the religious world, almost as many different shades, phases, kinds, and degrees, of *Calvinism*, as there are *Calvinists*, (or professors of the doctrines of Calvin,) and almost as many diverse opinions on the faith and character of the Reformer himself. But, (as the present Translator has already remarked,) he now presents the Church of Christ in England, and the British public in general, with (they may rest fully assured) "CALVIN'S *own* CALVINISM."

CALVINISM is a designation, by which the doctrines of the sovereign grace of God have been distinguished for the last two centuries; but, more particularly and generally, for the last century. The term derives, of course, its descriptiveness, from the historical fact, that the eminent Swiss Reformer was the chosen servant of God, appointed by Him to proclaim and defend, more prominently than any cotemporary or antecedent witness, the sublime doctrines in question. Not that these stupendous truths originated with Calvin, but with God himself. They form an essential portion of the revelation of his Word. They are no more Calvin*ism*, than Augustin*ism*, or Luther*ism*, or Bucer*ism*, or Cranmer*ism*, or Latimer*ism*: for they are Bible*ism*: and they are the *ism* of every saint, and true minister of Christ: they are the solidity and security of all true religion: they are the

fast-hold of faith: they form a substantial ingredient in every true ministry of the Gospel: and they constitute an essential doctrine in the confession of every true Church of Christ. Hence it is, that the truthful and faithful Reformers interwove it with the whole worship and services, and laid it at the foundation of the confession, of the Church of England!

The admirable Calvin has treated this stupendous subject with all the penetrating acumen, and commanding might, of mind, with which he was peculiarly endowed by nature; and with that accuracy, conclusiveness, and force of logical argument, of which he was a perfect and powerful master. These natural and acquired qualifications for his important task, enabled him to discover, at the farthest distance, the subtle aims of his opponents, in all their hostile reality; and to establish against them a self-defending bulwark of Divine Truth, with impregnable and lasting solidity: while "the unction from the Holy One," with which he was himself anointed, as a son and a servant of the Most High, (1 John ii. 20) sanctifying all his intellectual and literary powers, has rendered these holy and masterly TREATISES as much a delight and a profit to the Church of Christ, as an exposure, refutation, and condemnation of the world;—of human reason, scepticism, and infidelity. The crowning success of the whole, however, is, that the God of Truth is greatly glorified, by this his noble and edifying witness's indestructible testimony!

When Martin Luther had by the "hammer" of God's "word" (Jer. xxiii. 29), beaten to atoms the mighty pile of superstition, idolatry, hypocrisy, formality, "will-worship," work-worship, and infinite "abominations," erected by the twelve-centuries labor of the antichristian HARLOT OF THE WORLD! and had based on its prostrate and exposed ruins, the great cardinal doctrine of salvation,—*Justification by Faith!*—the Church of Christ, thus reformed, and "turned from dead works to serve the living God" (1 Thess. i. 9), soon required, under her characteristic

infirmities, a stability and confidence, in her newly 'given faith' (Ephes. ii. 8); and a security, that should assure her of its appointed "end;"—'the salvation of the soul.' (1 Pet. i. 9.) The great and merciful Head of his Church, seeing this, raised up John Calvin, and divinely and powerfully equipped him to go forth, and minister to the yet unassured Church, the doctrines of his electing, predestinating, and immutable grace; founded on his sovereign will, and inscrutable purpose. These glorious doctrines formed then, as they do now, and ever will do, "chambers" (Is. xxvi. 20, and Song i. 4), into which believers might enter; and "beds" upon which they might securely and eternally rest (Is. lvii. 2, and Ps. cxlix. 5). Thus, a scope and foundation were given for the assurance of faith, as broad and as sure as the Eternal Mind!

The human and unregenerate mind, however, utterly incapable of soaring to an adequate and reverential contemplation of these all-high and supernatural truths, has ever fallen back, dazzled and confounded, upon its own vain, ineffectual, and often irreverent and profane reasonings. (1 Cor. ii. 14.) These reasonings, in all their forms, the present work of Calvin meets, exposes, refutes, and condemns. It explains the real nature of these sublime mysteries, and exalts them, in triumph, over all the reason, pride, and malice of the "natural man." Nor has there ever been, nor is there now, nor is there likely to be, an opposing argument of unsanctified reason, which the present Works do not state, or anticipate, expose, and refute.

And wherever the "natural man," unrenewed and untaught by the Spirit of God, *does* receive the sublime doctrines of grace "in the letter" of them, (for myriads of such receivers there ever are!)—planted as they then must be, in the soil of a graceless, hard, unbroken, and unhumbled spirit; such professors of them, state them, expound, teach, preach, and enforce them, in a manner immeasurably beneath their highness and their holiness;

—in a manner, tainted, more or less, with irreverence, if not with presumption, or even with profanity. Such an unsanctified method of setting forth the sublime verities of electing and predestinating grace, can never *profit* either sinner or saint; but must create, in both, grief, or offence, or disgust. But where these mighty truths are taught by the Spirit of their glorious Author, which is ever the case with all the children of God, ministers and people ("All thy children shall be taught of the Lord," Is. liv. 13), their profoundly reverent tenure, and their holy exposition, are always inseparably united. When thus received and deposited in the broken and humbled hearts of the disciples of Christ, under "the unction that teacheth" (1 John ii. 20), they will be held, without exception, in all humility, reverence, and adoration; and under their saving influence, the prostration of soul before their majesty, will be equal to the confidence they inspire, and to the triumph of faith over sin, death, and hell, which they secure. In a word, they will ever be held and taught, by all who are saved by them, as they were by the heavenly John Calvin, the possessor, teacher, and defender of their truth, their value, their sublimity, and their incomprehensibility.

There is not, perhaps, an *extra*-Bible saint recorded or known, in whom can be found greater humility, meekness, contrition, reverence, and adoration, than are evident throughout the life, ministry, and writings of John Calvin. In him, therefore, all the "family of heaven" (Eph. iii. 15) on earth, find not only a burning and a shining light, as an eminent servant of Christ; but a holy, humble, and loving brother, a broken-hearted fellow-sinner, a saved fellow-saint, and a profound fellow-worshipper: a "lamb" before the saints, but a "lion" before the world: a "lamb" *before* God, but a "lion" *for* God! One with whom they can "see eye to eye" (Isa. lii. 8) in all Divine things; while they gladly bow before the authority and power of his testimony!

Illegitimate Calvinists (as sound divines and faithful men have, during the last century, correctly designated the graceless *imitators* of Calvin) know nothing of the spirit or religion of Calvin; nor *can* they know *either*, because they possess *neither*. We have already described their spirit, their profession, and their teaching; which are as far and as diverse from those of Calvin, as darkness from light; as the "spirit which is from above," from the spirit which is from the earth, or from beneath. They neither know Calvin's religion, nor can have any fellowship with him therein, nor he with them. These illegitimate representatives of the humble and holy Reformer, being unregenerate persons, are often unholy, as well as unhumbled men. They are frequently *Antinomians* in doctrine, if not in practice. Not so was Calvin. He was as holy as he was truthful; as humble as he was fearless; as remarkable for his chastity as for his intrepidity. Were he now on earth, he would not acknowledge these characters as his legitimate offspring. One hour's attempt to hold communion with them, would force from him that solemn sentence which will, it may be feared, be one day pronounced on them by "a Greater" than Calvin,—"I know you not!"

It has been a matter of much wonder to the Translator, that no *English* versions of these important Treatises of Calvin—the present, and that of which *notice* is given at the commencement of the present volume, have ever appeared; for they embody the very faith, and testimony, and ministry of the prominent Reformer. It is surprising that none of those good and industrious men, who translated into English that invaluable and imperishable work, Luther "On the Galatians," and those other standard *reformative* productions, Luther "On the Psalms of Degrees," Luther's "Sermons," Calvin "On Job," and Dean Nowel's "Catechism," &c., &c., did not give the British Church an English version of the present Treatises. Yet so it is. No English Translation of these two pro-

ductions has ever appeared till the present, and the (D.V.) immediately forthcoming publications.

That no English *illegitimates* ever undertook the duty of representing, in English, their *pretended* father, is no marvel at all. The work must have been by far too hot for them to undertake. Their labour would have condemned and consumed their religion, as fast as they proceeded. Calvin's truth would have crushed and annihilated their error; his light would have discovered and exposed their darkness; his life would have awe-struck their death; and his holy fire would have consumed their graceless profession to ashes. No one, indeed, could faithfully and really translate Calvin, or Luther, or any other kindred servant of God, but a true participator in the religion of the original authors. One of a general acquaintance with the Latin, or French, or German languages of the original productions, might trans-vert the one language into another, but he could not trans-convey the mind, and most certainly could not trans-fuse, the saving spirit, of his author, whether Calvin or Luther. None could do this but a partaker of Calvin's or Luther's spirit, faith, and religion.

Whether it be the intent of the present meritoriously labouring "Calvin Society" to translate into English the two Treatises now under publication, the present Translator knows not. If it be so, there must lie in the way of every general English lover of Calvin, a very formidable pecuniary impediment. He could not procure *either* of these Treatises, without purchasing the whole of the already-issued series of the Calvin Society, amounting to forty or more volumes. The sight of this serious difficulty formed one portion of the present Translator's resolve to undertake his delightful task; knowing that he could thereby put these invaluable relic-testimonies into the hand of any *English* reader, for a moderate sum; and thus render the British Church of Christ a considerable monetary help, and confer upon her a lasting benefit:

thus furnishing, for her perusal and profit, TWO invaluable productions of the Geneva Reformer, which had lain unprofitable to her, and unknown by her, for above 300 years! *

One word more, in conclusion. — Above 300 years ago, were the divine contents of these Treatises penned by Calvin. But such is the enduring and unchangeable nature of all Divine Truth and its confession, that these testimonies of the beloved Reformer, which flowed from his heart, to be left, by his pen, on the pages of the originals, still meet, even when re-clothed in a different language, the spirits of all the 'family of heaven,' (Eph. iii. 15) as they read them, with the same divine life, freshness, and unction, as they would have been felt, if heard from the heart-supplied lips of John Calvin, at Geneva. So blessed, glorious, and true, is that word,— "For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting: and HIS TRUTH endureth from *generation* to *generation!*" (Ps. c. 5.)

If by the Divine blessing upon the present Translations, the disciples of Christ shall be comforted, and their faith confirmed; if the lovers of THE TRUTH shall be rejoiced and its defenders re-armed; if reasoners shall be rendered dumb, and infidels confounded and ashamed; if the Church of Christ shall be edified and God glorified; the Translator's satisfaction, object, and reward, will have been fully and abundantly realized.

* Since this paragraph was written, the "Calvin Society" has *discontinued* its operations; and these TWO TREATISES have *not been*, nor, of course, are now *intended to be*, translated by them.

3, *Upper Islington-terrace, London,*
December 27th, 1855.

A TREATISE

ON THE

ETERNAL PREDESTINATION OF GOD,

ETC., ETC.

THE CONSENT

OF THE PASTORS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, AT GENEVA, CONCERNING "THE ETERNAL PREDESTINATION OF GOD;" BY WHICH, HE HAS CHOSEN SOME MEN UNTO SALVATION, WHILE HE HAS LEFT OTHERS TO THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION; AND ALSO, THEIR CONSENT CONCERNING "THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD," * BY WHICH HE GOVERNS HUMAN AFFAIRS; SET FORTH

BY JOHN CALVIN.

The Pastors of the Church of Christ, at Geneva, pray, that God would grant to those most excellent Men, their supreme Lords, and to the Syndics, and Senate of Geneva, a just and holy administration of the State; and all happy prosperity and success.

THE same motive which impelled us to write this Book, most excellent SIRS, constrained us also to DEDICATE it to YOU; that it might go forth under your name and auspices.† —THE FREE ELECTION OF GOD, by which He adopts unto himself whom He will, out of the lost generation of men, has been hitherto publicly declared by us, in this city, with all reverence, sobriety, and sincerity; and has been peacefully received by the people. But now, Satan, the father of all strifes, has subtlely introduced by means of a cer-

* This portion of the CONSENT, concerning "the Providence of God," which originally formed *a Conclusion* to the present Treatise, is transferred, by the Translator, to the "Second Part" of "CALVIN'S CALVINISM," and made to constitute a PREFACE, by John Calvin, to that Work. An arrangement which, it is considered, will be deemed appropriate; and in peculiar harmony with the subject of the "Second Part," or Second Volume; which is "A DEFENCE of the SECRET PROVIDENCE of GOD;" by John Calvin.

† This testimony of esteem and love for their principal Pastor, CALVIN, and of value for his ministerial service, as their representative, in the following Treatise (1 Thess. v. 13), are lasting honours to the Church of Christ, at Geneva: while the manifestation of their scriptural and prayerful subjection to "the powers that be," is a bright crown upon the genuineness of their religious profession, as disciples of Christ. (Rom. xiii. 1; Titus iii. 1; Pet. ii. 13 to 17.)

tain worthless person, a wide spreading error; and has attempted to root out our doctrine, which is drawn from the pure Word of God, and to shake the faith of the people. But since this hungry hunter after vain glory wishes to gain notoriety out of the very flames of the temple of God; —lest he should catch that reward of his unholy audacity, for which he has laid his nets; let his name be buried under our silence; while we leave it purposely unmentioned.

But since the trouble which this vain mortal endeavoured to cause us, reaches unto you also, it is but just that you should partake the blessed fruit which God brings out of it. And as we have ever found you strenuous and hearty defenders of our holy cause, we have felt it to be our duty to testify, with all our ability, our gratitude. The performance of this our duty will also plainly shew, what *that doctrine is*, which you have protected by your favour and authority. And although it becomes neither the rulers of the State, nor the ministers of Christ, to be too anxious about rumours and tumults; and though all insidious revilings (which are generally lost, by degrees, in the noise which they make) should be despised, both by rulers and ministers of Christ, with fortitude and an exalted mind; yet, it is of the utmost importance, that the great reality of the matter concerned, should ever be kept in the hands, and (as engraven on public tablets) before the eyes, of all; that the plain statement of it may condemn and stop the false tongues of the foolish, the vain, or the wicked; and may, at the same time, repress the frivolous whispers of the people in general.

There was spread abroad, in many places, a rumour, that this vain person was severely bound in prison: whereas, he was perfectly free, and flying about the city openly, every day. And with what malignity some virulent ones imagined and stated, that *we* wished him to be put to death, you are yourselves our best witnesses.* To

* The person to whom allusion is here made, is Servetus, the crafty and angry enemy of the Truth, and of Calvin, its faithful defender: of whose being put to death Calvin is *falsely reported* to have been the

refute such calumnies, until they shall have vanished, by contempt and tranquil magnanimity, is the becoming duty of gravity and prudence.

On the other hand, however, lest some unstable ones should be moved; of whom serious care must be taken; —to set forth plainly, before all, the real state of the *case* and *cause* at issue, is no less expedient, than a solemn duty, on our part. For iniquity, unless it be resolutely met, makes its creeping way (as saith Paul) "like a canker." (2 Tim. ii. 17.) Now, this DEFENCE, which we offer to all the godly, will, we hope, be a strong and effectual remedy, to those who are healable; and will serve also as a wholesome antidote to the sound and the whole. And the subject itself is one to which the children of God should devote their most studious attention; that they become not ignorant of their heavenly birth and origin. For some fools, because the Gospel is called "the power of God unto salvation to every one that *believeth*," would blot out, under this pretext, the *election of God;* whereas, it ought to have entered into the minds of such, to think, *from whence faith comes!* Now, the Scripture everywhere proclaimeth aloud, that God giveth to his Son *those*, who were ever his; that He calleth those whom He hath chosen; and that those whom He hath adopted for sons, He begetteth by his Spirit; and finally, that the men whom He hath taught within, and to whom his "arm is revealed," *believe!* Wherefore, whosoever shall hold *faith* to be the earnest and pledge of adoption, will assuredly confess, that it flows from *Divine election*, as its eternal source. And yet, the knowledge of salvation is not to be sought, from the secret counsel of God.—Life is set before us, in Christ: who not only makes himself known, but presents himself to our enjoyment, in the Gospel. Into this mirror, let the eye of our faith ever

prominent adviser, as leading Pastor of the Genevan Church. The *truth* of which *rumour* is, in this Dedicatory Preface, most solemnly *denied:* and the whole Senate of Geneva is appealed to, in confirmation of the veracity of the denial. (See last paragraph of preceding page.)

Christ; could alone be blessed; and could alone be joined to the company of the saints. But the place and time for the refutation of the vain figment in question, was where, and when, it occurred. To refute so insipid a mortal by a published book, would not perhaps be so desirable and agreeable: for you are not ignorant how conceited he is: nor needs it be a matter of wonder, that a man, who could throw off his monk's cowl and immediately transform himself into a physician, should be a person of such consummate audacity! But to nauseate many, by pleasing him with an "answer of folly, according to his folly," (Prov. xxvi. 4,) would be somewhat foreign to my usual carefulness. And farther, since those two characters are known, and professed, enemies of the Gospel; and one of them, by attacking CALVIN by name, has proclaimed war with us and this Church, it has seemed to us much better, that the poison of the impious doctrine which has been spread abroad in their published books, should be purged away altogether, than that their absurdities should be farther propagated; which had much better remain buried out of knowledge. While it would moreover be tiresome, to utterly wear out the ears of men; which have been so long fatigued and tormented, with these superfluous contentions.

May God grant, noble and excellent SIRS, that (as ye have hitherto done with the highest praise,) ye may go on, unto the end, to defend, by your unwearied faith and authority, the pure doctrine of the Gospel of Christ; which is attacked on every side by the angry violence of the world; and that ye may never cease to receive, under your protecting care, all the godly, who flee to your protection; so that your city may ever be a sanctuary devoted to God, and a faithful asylum for the members of Christ; remaining immoveable amid these horrid tumults. Thus shall ye ever find Him to be an everlasting guardian of your safety. For whatever dwelling-place of man is dedicated to Him, shall abide safe under his power, and shall never fall!

January 1st, 1552.

A TREATISE

ON THE

ETERNAL PREDESTINATION OF GOD,

ETC., ETC.

NINE years have now elapsed, since Albertus Pighius, the Campanian, a man of evidently phrensied audacity, attempted, at the same time, and in the same book, to establish the *free-will* of man, and to subvert the secret counsel of God, by which he chooses some to salvation, and appoints others to eternal destruction. But as he attacked me by name, that he might stab, through my side, holy and sound doctrine: I have deemed it necessary to curb the sacrilegious madness of the man. At that time, however, being distracted by various engagements, I could not embrace, in one short space of time, the discussion of both subjects; but having published my thoughts upon the former, I promised to consider, when an opportunity should be given, the doctrine of *predestination*. Shortly after my book on *free-will* appeared, Pighius died. And that I might not insult a dead dog, I turned my attention to other serious matters. And from that time, till now, I have always found plenty to do. Moreover, as I had already copiously treated of this great point of doctrine,

and had set it forth clearly, and confirmed it by solid testimonies of Scripture, this new labour upon it did not seem so absolutely necessary, but that it might safely be suffered to rest, for a time.

But since, at the present day, certain maddened and exulting spirits strive, after the example of Pighius, with all their might, to destroy all that is contained in the Scriptures, concerning the free election of the godly, and the eternal judgment of the reprobate; I have considered it my duty to prevent this contagion from spreading farther, by collecting and summarily refuting, those frivolous objections, by which such men delude themselves and others. Among these characters, there started forth, in Italy, a certain one, Georgius, a Sicilian; an ignorant man indeed, and more worthy of contempt than public notice in any form: were it not, that a notoriety, obtained by fraud and imposture, has given him considerable power to do mischief. For when he was a monk, he remained unknown in his cell; until Lucius Abbas, one of the Tridentine fathers, raised him on high, by a lying commendation; hoping that he himself should be able, from the shoulders of his favourite, to take a flight into heaven itself. This abandoned fellow, having mendaciously given it out, that Christ had appeared to him, and appointed him an interpreter of the whole Scripture, persuaded many, without much trouble, to believe, with a stupid, shameless, and more than vain, folly, that which he had thus published. And that he might push the drama to the last act, he so trumpeted forth his insane visions, that he rendered his ignorant adherents, already fast bound by prejudice, perfectly astonished. And certain it is, that the greater part of men, in our day, are worthy of just such prophets. For the hearts of most of them, hardened and rendered obstinate by wickedness, will receive no healing; while the ears of others are ever itching with the insatiable desire of depraved speculations. There are, perhaps, others, who are exceptions, and whom we might

mention willingly and becomingly; but we will leave them unmentioned; resolving to make all our readers see and understand, how frivolous and worthless are the objections of all the enemies of the truth.

I propose, now, to enter into the sacred battle with Pighius, and George, the Sicilian; a pair of unclean beasts (Lev. xi. 3), by no means badly matched. For though I confess that in some things they differ: yet, in hatching enormities of error, in adulterating the Scripture with wicked and revelling audacity, in a proud contempt of the truth, in forward impudence, and in brazen loquacity, the most perfect likeness and sameness will be found to exist between them. Except that, Pighius, by inflating the muddy bombast of his magniloquence, carries himself with greater boast and pomp; while the other fellow, borrows the boots, by which he elevates himself, from his invented revelation. And though both of them, at their commencement, agree in their attempt to overthrow predestination; yet, they afterwards differ in the figments which they advance. An invention of them both is, that it lies in each one's own liberty, whether he will become a partaker of the grace of adoption or not: and that it does not depend on the counsel and decree of God, who are elect, and who are reprobate; but that each one determines for himself the one state or the other, by his own will; and with respect to the fact, that some believe the Gospel, while others remain in unbelief;—that this difference does not arise, from the free election of God, nor from his secret counsel, but from the will of each individual.

Now Pighius explains his mind on the great matter before us thus:—that God, by his immutable counsel, created all men to salvation without distinction: but that, as He foresaw the fall of Adam; in order that his election might nevertheless remain firm and unaltered, He applied a remedy, which might, therefore, be common to all; which remedy was his confirmation of the election of the whole human race, in Christ; so that, no one can perish

but he who, by his own obstinacy, blots his name out of the book of life. And his view of the other side of the great question is, that, as God foresaw that some would determinately remain unto the last, in malice and a contempt of Divine grace, He by his foreknowledge, reprobated such, unless they should repent. This, with him, is the origin of reprobation: by which he makes it out, that the wicked deprive themselves of the benefit of universal election, irrespectively and independently of the counsel and will of God altogether. And he moreover declares, that all those who hold and teach, that certain persons are positively and absolutely chosen to salvation, while others are as absolutely appointed to destruction, think unworthily of God; and impute to him a severity, utterly foreign to his justice and his goodness. And our human reasoner here condemns the sentiments of Augustine; mentioning him by name.

And in order to show, as he thinks, that the foreknowledge of God detracts nothing from the freedom of our own will, our impostor betakes himself to that cunning device of Nicolaus of Cusa; who would make us believe, that God did not foresee, in their *future* aspect and reality, those things, that were known to Him from all eternity, but viewed them, as it were, in a then present light. And here, moreover, he elevates his brow, in a manner peculiar to himself, as if he had discovered some deeply hidden thing: whereas, this subterfuge of his is in the mouth of every schoolboy. But as he still finds himself truth-bound by the leg, he struggles to escape, by introducing a twofold foreknowledge of God. He asserts, that God formed the design of creating man to life, before He foreknew his fall; and that, therefore, the thought of man's salvation, preceded the foreknowledge of his death, as to its order, in the mind of God Himself. And as he rolls out these sentiments in a muddy torrent of words, he thinks that he thereby, so befloods the senses of his readers, that they can perceive nothing distinctly and clearly. I hope, how-

ever, by my brevity, to dispel, presently, the darkness of this man's loquacity.

It is the figment of Georgius, that no man whatever, neither one nor another, is predestinated to salvation; but that God pre-appointed a time, in which He would save the whole world. In his attempt to prove this, he wrests certain passages of Paul: such as this,—"Even the mystery, which hath been hid from ages, and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints." Having twisted this passage of the apostle to his purpose, he slips away in security; thinking himself victorious. Just as if no testimony of Scripture plainly declares, that some are chosen of God to salvation, while others are passed by. In a word; in the matter of election, this man considers nothing but the time of the New Testament.

What my mind on this momentous subject is, my "Institute" furnishes a full and abundant testimony; even if I should now add nothing more. I would, in the first place, entreat my readers carefully to bear in memory, the admonition which I there offer;—that this great subject is not, as many imagine, a mere thorny and noisy disputation; nor a speculation which wearies the minds of men without any profit; but a solid discussion, eminently adapted to the service of the godly: because it builds us up soundly in the faith, trains us to humility, and lifts us up into an admiration of the unbounded goodness of God towards us; while it elevates us to praise this goodness in our highest strains. For there is not a more effectual means of building up faith, than the giving our open ears to the election of God: which the Holy Spirit seals upon our heart while we hear: shewing us, that it stands in the eternal and immutable good-will of God towards us: and that, therefore, it cannot be moved or altered by any storms of the world, by any assaults of Satan, by any changes, or by any fluctuations or weaknesses of the flesh. For our salvation is then sure to us, when we find the *cause* of it in the

breast of God. Thus, when we lay hold of life in Christ, made manifest to our faith, the same faith being still our leader and guide, our sight is permitted to penetrate much farther, and to see from what *source* that life proceeded. Our confidence of salvation is rooted in Christ, and rests on the promises of the Gospel. But it is no weak prop to our confidence, when we are brought to believe in Christ, to hear that all was originally *given* to us of God; and that we were as much ordained to faith in Christ, before the foundation of the world, as we were chosen to the inheritance of eternal life in Christ.

Hence, therefore, arises the impregnable and insubvertible security of the saints. The Father, who gave us to the Son, as his peculiar treasure, is stronger than all who oppose us: and he will not suffer us to be plucked out of his hand. What a cause for humility then in the saints of God, when they see such a difference of condition made in those who are, by nature, all alike! Whereever the sons of God turn their eyes, they behold such wonderful instances of blindness, ignorance, and insensibility, as fill them with horror: while they, in the midst of such darkness, have received divine illumination; and know it, and feel it, to be so. How (say they) is it, that some, under the clear light, continue in darkness and blindness? Who makes this difference? One thing they know by their own experience; that, whereas *their* eyes were also once closed, they are now opened. Another thing is also certain;—that those, who willingly remain ignorant of any difference between them and others, have never yet learned to render unto God the glory due to him for making that difference.

Now no one doubts, that humility lies at the bottom of all true religion, and is the mother of all virtues. But how shall *he* be humble, who will not hear of the original sin and misery from which he has been delivered? and who, by extending the saving mercy of God to all, with-

out difference, lessens, as much as in him lies, the glory of that mercy? Those, most certainly, are the farthest from glorifying the grace of God, according to its greatness, who declare, that it is, indeed, common to all men; but that it rests effectually in *them*, because *they* have embraced it by faith. The *cause* of faith itself, however, they would keep buried, all the time, out of sight; which is this;—that the children of God, who are chosen to be sons, are afterwards blessed with the spirit of adoption. Now, what kind of gratitude is that, in me, if, being endowed with so pre-eminent a benefit, I consider myself no greater a debtor than he, who hath not received one-hundredth part of it. Wherefore, if, to praise the goodness of God worthily, it is necessary to bear in mind, how much we are indebted to Him; those are malignant towards Him, and rob Him of his glory, who reject, and will not endure, the doctrine of eternal election: which being buried out of sight, one-half of the grace of God must, of necessity, vanish with it.

Let those roar at us who will. We will ever brighten forth, with all our power of language, the doctrine which we hold concerning the free election of God; seeing that it is only by it, that the faithful can understand how great that goodness of God is, which effectually called them to salvation. I merely give the great doctrine of election a slight touch here, lest any one, by avoiding a subject so necessary for him to know, should afterwards feel what loss his neglect has caused him. I will, by and by, in its proper place, enter into the divine matter with appropriate fulness. Now if we are not really ashamed of the Gospel, we must, of necessity, acknowledge, what is therein openly declared; —that God, by his eternal good-will (for which there was no other cause than his own purpose), appointed those whom He pleased unto salvation, rejecting all the rest; and that those whom He blessed with this free adoption to be his sons, He illumines by his Holy Spirit, that they may receive the life which is offered to them in Christ; while

others, continuing, of their own will, in unbelief, are left destitute of the light of faith, in total darkness.

Against this unsearchable judgment of God many insolent dogs rise up and bark. Some of them, indeed, hesitate not to attack God openly: asking why, foreseeing the fall of Adam, He did not better order the affairs of men? To curb such spirits as these, no better means need be sought than those which Paul sets before us. He supposes this question to be put by an ungodly person:—How can God be just, in showing mercy to whom He will, and hardening whom He will? Such audacity in men the apostle considers unworthy a reply. He does nothing but remind them of their order and position in God's creation. "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" (Rom. ix. 20.) Profane men, indeed, vainly babble, that the apostle covered the absurdity of the matter with silence, for want of an answer. But the case is far otherwise.

The apostle, in this appeal, adopts an axiom, or universal acknowledgment: which not only ought to be held fast by all godly minds, but deeply engraven in the breast of common sense:—that the inscrutable judgment of God is deeper than can be penetrated by man. And what man, I pray you, would not be ashamed to compress all the *causes* of the works of God within the confined measure of his individual intellect? Yet, on this hinge turns the whole question.—Is there no justice of God, but that which is conceived of by us? Now if we should throw this into the form of one question,—whether it be lawful to measure the power of God by our natural sense,—there is not a man who would not immediately reply, that all the senses of all men combined in one individual must faint under an attempt to comprehend the immeasurable power of God: and yet, as soon as a *reason* cannot immediately be seen for certain works of God, men, somehow or other, are immediately prepared to appoint a day for entering into judgment with Him. What therefore can be more opportune or appropriate than the apostle's

appeal?—that those, who would thus raise themselves above the heavens in their reasonings, utterly forget who and what they are?

And suppose God, ceding his own right, should offer Himself, as ready to render a reason for his works. When the matter came to those secret counsels of his, which angels adore with trembling, who would not be utterly bereft of his senses before such glorious splendour? Marvellous, indeed, is the madness of man! who would more audaciously set himself above God, than stand on equal ground with any Pagan judge! It is intolerable to you and hateful, that the power and works of God should exceed the capacity of your own mind: and yet, you will grant to an *equal* the enjoyment of his own mind and judgment. Now will you, with such madness as this, dare to make mention of the adorable God? What do you really think of God's glorious name? And will you vaunt, that the apostle is devoid of all reason, because he does not drag God from his throne, and set Him before you, to be questioned and examined?

Let *us*, however, be fully assured that the apostle, in the first place, here curbs with becoming gravity the licentious madness of these men, who make nothing of attacking openly the justice of God; and that, in the next place, he gives to the worshippers of God a more useful counsel of moderation, than if he had taught them to soar, on eagles' wings, above the forbidden clouds. For that soberness of mind, which, regulated by the fear of God, keeps itself within the bounds of comprehension prescribed by him; is far better than all human wisdom. Let proud men revile this sobriety if they will; calling it ignorance. But let this sober-mindedness ever hold fast that which is the height of all true wisdom;—that, by holding the will of God to be the highest rule of righteousness, we ascribe to Him his own proper and peculiar glory.

But Pighius and his fellows are not hereby satisfied.

For, pretending a great concern for the honour of God, they bark at us, as imputing to Him a cruelty utterly foreign to his nature. Pighius denies that he has any contest with God. What cause, or whose cause is it, then, that Paul maintains? After he had adopted the above axiom,—that God hardens whom He will, and has mercy on whom He will, he subjoins the supposed taunt of a wicked reasoner,—"Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" (Rom. ix. 19.) He meets such blasphemy as this, by simply setting against it the power of God. If those clothe God with the garment of a tyrant, who refer the hardening of men even to his eternal counsel; we, most certainly, are not the originators of this doctrine. If they do God an injury who set his will above all other causes, Paul taught this doctrine long before us. Let these enemies of God, then, dispute the matter with the apostle. For I maintain nothing, in the present discussion, but what I declare is taught by him. About these barking dogs, however, I would not be very anxious. I am the rather moved with an anxiety about some, otherwise good men, who, while they fear lest they should ascribe to God anything unworthy of his goodness, really seem to be horror-struck at that which He declares, by the apostle, concerning himself.

Now, we are holding fast, all the while, a godly purpose of vindicating the justice of God from all calumny. And the modesty of these timid ones would be worthy of all praise, if it were not the offspring of moroseness, inflated with a certain secret pride. For such men speak according to their own natural sense and understanding. But why do they fear to concede to the power of God, that which is beyond the power of their own mind to comprehend, lest his *justice* should be endangered? Why, I say, is this? It is because they presume to subject the tribunal of God to their own judgment. Now, Paul shows us, that it is an act of intolerable pride in any man to assume to himself the judgment of his brother: because

there is one Judge, by whom we all stand or fall; and to whom every knee must bow. What madness is it then, for a man to raise his crest against this only Judge himself, and to presume to measure his infinite power by natural sense!

They, therefore, who allege as an excuse, that modesty prevents them from subscribing to the Apostle Paul's testimony, must of necessity, in the first place, confess, that whatever praise they give to the justice of God, is restricted to the bounds of their own natural comprehensions. And in the next place, if, agreeing in reality, with us, they choose rather to suppress this part of the great doctrine, lest they should give rein to the insolence of the wicked; such caution is quite preposterous. As if the honour of God could be protected by our lies! God himself not only rejects such protection as this, but declares, in the Book of Job, that it is hateful to Him. Let such defenders take care, lest by affecting greater caution than the Lord prescribes in his Word, they become guilty of a twofold madness and folly.

The moderation and caution which these men recommend are, indeed, beneficial, in repressing the blasphemies of the impious. But if such persons persuade themselves, that they shall be able, by their words, to put the bridle on rebels against God and his truth; their hope and expectation are ridiculous. The Apostle Paul, after having dwelt upon the secret counsels of God, as far as was needful, puts forth his hand, as it were, to forbid us to go farther. Restless spirits, however, *will* kick and butt; and, with unsettled levity, leap over the barrier placed before them. How think ye, then, that such will stop at the nod of this or that sober mind, that would set still narrower bounds to their headlong course? You may as well attempt to hold, with a cobweb, a fierce-spirited horse, that has burst the bars, and prances in his strength. But you will say, In a matter so difficult and deep as this, nothing is better than to think moderately.

Who denies it? But we must, at the same time, examine, what kind and degree of moderation it is: lest we should be drawn into the principle of the Papists: who, to keep their disciples obedient to them, make them like mute and brute beasts.

But shall it be called Christian simplicity to consider, as hurtful, the knowledge of those things which God sets before us? But, (say our opponents) this subject is one of which we may remain ignorant, without loss or harm. As if our heavenly Teacher were not the best judge of what it is expedient for us to know, and to what extent we ought to know it! Wherefore, that we may not struggle amid the waves, nor be borne about in the air, unfixed and uncertain, nor, by getting our foot too deep, be drowned in the gulph below; let us so give ourselves to God, to be ruled by Him, and taught by Him, that, contented with his Word alone, we may never desire to know more than we find therein. No! not even if the power so to do were given to us! This teachableness, in which every godly man will ever hold all the powers of his mind, under the authority of the Word of God, is the true and only rule of wisdom.

Now *wherever*, and *how far* soever, He, who is "the Way," thus leads us, with his outstretched hand, whose Spirit spoke by the apostles and the prophets, we may most safely *follow*. And the *remaining ignorant* of all those things, which are *not learnt* in the school of God, far excels all the penetration of human intellect. Wherefore, Christ requires of his sheep, that they should not only hold their ears open to his voice, but keep them shut against the voice of strangers. Nor can it ever be, but that the vain winds of error, from every side, must blow through a soul, devoid of sound doctrine. Moreover, I can, with all truth, confess, that I never should have spoken or written on this subject, unless the Word of God, in my own soul, had led the way. All godly readers will, indeed, gather this from my former writings;

and especially from my "Institute." But this present refutation of my enemies, who oppose themselves to me, will, perhaps, afford my friends some new light upon the matter.

But since the authority of the ancient Church is, with much hatred, cast in my teeth; it will perhaps be worth our while to consider, at the commencement, how unjustly the truth of Christ is smothered, under this enmity: the ground of which is, in one sense, false, and in another frivolous. This accusation, however, such as it is, I would rather wipe off with the words of Augustine, than with my own. For the Pelagians of old annoyed him with the same accusation: saying, that he had all other writers of the Church against him. In his reply, he remarks, that before the heresy of Pelagius, the fathers of the primitive Church did not deliver their opinions so deeply and accurately upon predestination: which reply, indeed, is the truth. And he adds,—"What need is there for us to search the works of those writers, who, before the heresy of Pelagius arose, found no necessity for devoting themselves to this question, so difficult of solution? Had such necessity arisen, and had they been compelled to reply to the enemies of predestination, they would doubtless have done so." This remark of Augustine is a prudent one, and a wise one. For if the enemies of the grace of God had not worried Augustine himself, he never would have devoted so much labour (as he himself confesses) to the discussion of God's election.

Hence, in reference to his book, entitled, "On the Blessing of Perseverance," he pointedly says, "This predestination of the saints is certain and manifest: which, necessity afterwards compelled me to defend more diligently and laboriously, when I was discussing the subject in opposition to a certain new sect. For I have learned, that every separate heresy introduces into the Church its peculiar questions; which call for a more diligent defence of the Holy Scripture, than if no such necessity of defence

had arisen. For what was it that compelled me to defend, in that work of mine, with greater copiousness and fuller explanation, those passages of the Scriptures in which predestination is set before us? What, but the starting up of the Pelagians? who say, that the grace of God is given to us, according as we render ourselves deserving of it."

Augustine had moreover just before denied, that any prejudice against his books, could be justly entertained because of their want of the authority of the ancient Church. "No one (says he) can surely be so unjust, or so invidious, as not to allow me to gain some instruction and profit for myself, from this important subject." And he afterwards contends, that it could be gathered from the testimonies of some of the ancient fathers, that their sentiments and teaching were the same as his own. Not to mention other authorities, to which he refers, that is a more than satisfactory one which he cites from Ambrose: —"Whom Christ has mercy on, He calls." Again, "When He will, He makes, out of careless ones, devoted ones." And again, "But God calls whom He condescends to call; and whom He will, He makes religious." Now who does not see, that the sum of the whole Divine matter is comprehended in these few words? Ambrose here assigns the reason or cause, why all men do not come to Christ that they may obtain salvation.—Because, God does not effectually touch their hearts. The holy man declares, that the conversion of a sinner proceeds from the free election of God; and that the reason why He calls some, while others are left reprobate, lies solely in his own will. Ambrose neither hesitates nor dissembles here. Now, who that is endowed with the most common judgment does not perceive, that the state of the whole question is contained in, and defined by, these three summaries?

In a word, Augustine is so wholly with me, that if I wished to write a confession of my faith, I could do so,

with all fulness and satisfaction to myself, out of his writings. But that I may not, on the present occasion, be too prolix, I will be content with three or four instances of his testimony; from which it will be manifest, that he does not differ from me, one pin's point. And it would be more manifest still, could the whole line of his confession be adduced, how fully and solidly he agrees with me in every particular. In his book, "Concerning the Predestination of the Saints," he has these words: "Lest any one should say, My faith, my righteousness (or anything of the kind) distinguishes me from others; meeting all such thoughts, the great teacher of the Gentiles asks, 'What hast thou that thou hast not received?' As if the Apostle had said, From whom indeed could'st thou receive it, but from Him who separates thee, from every other, to whom He has not given what He has given to thee?"—Augustine then adds, "Faith, therefore, from its beginning to its perfection, is the gift of God. And that this gift is bestowed on some, and not on others, who will deny, but he who would fight against the most manifest testimonies of the Scripture? But why faith is not given to all, ought not to concern the believer; who knows, that all men by the sin of one, came into most just condemnation. But why God delivers one from this condemnation and not another, belongs to his inscrutable judgments: and 'his ways are past finding out.' And if it be investigated and inquired, how it is that each receiver of faith is deemed of God worthy to receive such a gift, there are not wanting those who will say, It is by their human will. But we say that it is by grace; or Divine predestination."

The holy father, then makes these beautiful and striking observations. "Indeed the Saviour of the world himself, the adorable Son of God, is the brightest luminary of Divine grace and eternal predestination; not only with respect to his Divine nature, as the Son of God, but especially also in reference to his human nature, as

'Man.' For in what way, I pray you, did 'THE MAN Christ Jesus,' as Man, merit so great a glory as that, being taken into union with the Divine Person of the Son, by the word of the co-eternal Father, He should become the 'only-begotten Son of God!' What good word or work preceded, in this glorious case?—what good thing did 'THE MAN' perform?—what act of faith did He exercise?—what prayer did He offer up? that He should be exalted to such pre-eminent dignity!—Now here, perhaps, some profane and insolent being may be inclined to say, 'Why was it not I, that was predestinated to this excellent greatness?' If we should reply, in the solemn appeal of the Apostle, 'Nay, but who art thou, O man, that repliest against God;' and if such an one should not even then restrain his daring spirit; but should give more rein to his blasphemy, and say, 'Why do you utter to me the caution, "Who art thou, O man," &c.?—Am I not a man, as He was, concerning whom thou speakest?—Why then am I not now what He is?—He, forsooth, is what He is, and as great as He is, by grace.—Why then is the grace different, where the nature is the same? For, most assuredly, there is no acceptance of persons with God.'—Now I would solemnly ask, What Christian man, nay, what madman, would thus reason, speak, or think? Let then our glorious Head himself, the fountain of all grace, be an ever-shining luminary of eternal predestination, and a Divine example of its sovereign nature. And from Him let the stream of electing grace flow through all his members, 'according to the measure of the gift,' in each.—This then is the eternal predestination of the saints! which shone with such surpassing splendour in the SAINT of saints! And as He alone was *predestinated*, as MAN, to be our HEAD; so many of us are also *predestinated* to be *his members!*"

Now, that no one might attribute it to faith, that one is preferred above another, Augustine testifies, that men are not chosen *because* they believe; but, on the contrary,

are chosen *that they might* believe. In like manner, when writing to Sextus, he says, "As to the great deep,—*why* one man believes, and another does not,—*why* God delivers one man and not another,—let him who can, search into that profound abyss. But let him beware of the awful precipice." Again, in another place, he says, "Who created the reprobate, but God? And why? because He willed it. Why did He will it?—'Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?'" And again, elsewhere, after he had proved that God is moved by no merits of men, to make them obedient to his commands; but that He renders unto them good for evil; and that for his own sake, and not for theirs; he adds, "If any one should ask why God makes some men his sheep, and not others, the Apostle, dreading this question, exclaims, 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!'"

And as Augustine, tracing the beginning or origin of election to the free and gratuitous will of God, places reprobation in his mere will likewise; so, he teaches, that the security of our salvation stands in that will also; and in nothing else. For, writing to Paulinus, he affirms, that those who do not persevere unto the end, belong not to the calling of God: which is always effectual, and without any repentance in him. And, in another work he maintains, more fully, that perseverance is freely bestowed on the elect; from which they can never fall away. "Thus, (says he,) when Christ prayed for Peter, that his faith might not fail, what else did he ask of God, but that there might be with, or in, Peter's faith, a fully free, fully courageous, fully victorious, fully persevering will, or determination? And he had just before said, 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.' The faith of such, which worketh by love, either faileth not at all, or, if there be any in whom it does partially fail, it is renewed

and restored before this life is ended. That iniquity which had interrupted it, is done away; and the faith still perseveres unto the end. But those who are not designed of God to persevere,—if *they* fall from the Christian faith, and the end of life finds them in that state, thus fallen,—such, doubtless, could not have been of this number of God's elect, even while they were, to all appearance, living well and righteously. For such were never separated from the general mass of perdition, by the foreknowledge and predestination of God; and therefore were never 'called according to his purpose.'" And, that no one might be disturbed in mind, because those sometimes fall away who had been considered the sons of God, he meets such perplexed ones thus:—"Let no one think, that those ever fall away, who are the subjects of predestination, who are the called according to God's purpose, and who are truly the children of promise. Those who live godly in appearance, are, indeed, called by men the children of God; but, because they are destined sometime or other to live ungodly, and to die in that ungodliness, God does not call them his children in his foreknowledge. They who are ordained unto life are understood, by the Scripture, to be given unto Christ. These are predestinated and called, according to God's purpose. Not one of these ever perishes. And on this account, no such one, though changed from good to bad, for a time, ever ends his life so; because, he is for that end ordained of God, and for that end given unto Christ, that he might not perish but have eternal life."

A little afterwards the same Augustine saith, "Those who, by the all-foreseeing appointment of God, are foreknown, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified; are the children of God; not only before they are regenerated, but before they are born of woman; and such can never perish." He then assigns the reason; "Because (says he) God works all things together for the good of such; and he so makes all things thus to work together for their

good, that if some of them go out of the way, and even exceed all bounds, he makes even this to work for their good and profit; for they return to him, more humble and more teachable than before."

And if the matter be carried higher, and a question be moved concerning the first creation of man, Augustine meets that question thus;—"We most wholesomely confess, that which we most rightly believe; that God, the Lord of all things, who created all things 'very good,' foreknew, that evil would arise out of this good: and he also knew, that it was more to the glory of his omnipotent goodness, to bring good out of evil, than not to permit evil to be at all! And He so ordained the lives of angels and of men that He might first show, in them, what free-will could do; and then, afterwards show, what the free gift of his grace and the judgment of his justice could do."

In his "Manual" to Laurentinus, he more freely and fully explains whatever of doubt might yet remain. "When Christ shall appear (says he) to judge the world, at the last day, that shall be seen, in the clearest light of knowledge, which the faith of the godly now holds fast, though not yet made manifest to their comprehension;—how sure, how immutable, how all-efficacious is the will of God;—how many things He could do, or has power to do, which He wills not to do; (but that He wills nothing which He has not power to do;) and how true that is which the Psalmist sings, 'The Lord hath done in heaven whatsoever pleased Him.' This however is not true, if he *willed* some things, and *did* them not. Nothing, therefore, is done, but that which the Omnipotent *willed* to be done, either by permitting it to be done, or by doing it himself. Nor is a doubt to be entertained, that God does righteously in permitting all those things to be done, which are done evilly. For He permits not this but by righteous judgment. Although, therefore, those things which are evil, in so far as they are evil, are not good; yet, it *is good*, that there should not only be good

things, but evil things also. For, unless there were this good,—that evil things also existed; those evil things would not be permitted, by the Great and *Good* Omnipotent, to exist at all. For He, without doubt, can as easily refuse to permit to be done what He does not will to be done, as He can do that which He wills to be done. Unless we fully believe this, the very beginning of our faith is perilled: by which, we profess to believe in God ALMIGHTY!"

Augustine then adds this short sentence. "These are the mighty works of the Lord! shining with perfection in every instance of his will; and so perfect in wisdom, that when the angelic and human nature had sinned; that is, had done, not what God willed, but what each nature itself willed; it came to pass, that, by this same will of the creature, God, though in one sense unwilling, yet accomplished what *He* willed, righteously, and with the height of all wisdom: overruling the evils done, to the damnation of those whom He had justly predestinated to punishment, and to the salvation of those whom he had mercifully predestinated to grace. Wherefore, as far as these natures themselves were concerned, *they* did what they did, contrary to the will of God: but, as far as the omnipotence of God is concerned, they acted according to his will: nor could they have acted contrary to it. Hence, by their very acting contrary to the will of God, the will of God concerning them was done. So mighty, therefore, are the works of God, so gloriously and exquisitely perfect, in every instance of his will, that, by a marvellous and ineffable plan of operation, peculiar to himself, as the 'allwise God,' *that* cannot be done, *without* his will, which is even *contrary* to his will. Because, it could not be done without his permitting it to be done: which permission is evidently not *contrary* to his will, but *according* to his will." I have gladly extracted these few things, out of many like them, in the writings of Augustine; that my readers may clearly see, with what a very

modest face it is! that Pighius represents him as differing from me! and makes use of him to support his own errors. I shall, indeed, hereafter, occasionally refer to the testimonies of this same holy man, in the course of this discussion.

I will now enter upon the more express subject and object of the present undertaking: which are, to prove, that nothing has been taught by me concerning this important doctrine but that which God himself clearly teaches us all, in the Sacred Oracles. The sum of which is this;—that the salvation of believers depends on the eternal election of God; for which no cause or reason can be rendered, but his own gratuitous good pleasure. Most plain and eloquent, on this point, are the words of the Apostle Paul, in his first chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians; "Blessed (saith he) be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places, in Christ. According as he hath chosen us in Him, before the foundation of the world."—Now I hear, in a moment, the babble of Pighius;—that the whole human race were chosen in Christ; that whosoever should take hold of Him by faith, should obtain salvation. In this absurd invention of his there are two most gross blunders; which may be immediately refuted by the words of the same Apostle.

In the first place, there is, most certainly and evidently, an inseparable connexion between the elect and the reprobate. So that the election, of which the apostle speaks, cannot consist, unless we confess that God separated from all others certain persons, whom it pleased Him thus to separate. Now, this act of God is expressed by the term *predestinating;* which the apostle afterwards twice repeats. He moreover calls those "chosen" (or elected) who are engrafted by faith into the body of Christ: and that this blessing is by no means common to all men is openly manifest. The apostle therefore, by the "chosen," evidently means those, whom Christ condescends to call, after they have been given to Him by the Father. But,

to make faith the *cause* of election is altogether absurd; and utterly at variance with the words of the apostle. "Paul does not (as Augustine wisely observes) declare, that the children of God were 'chosen,' because He *foreknew* they *would believe*, but in order that they *might believe*. Nor does the apostle (says he) call them 'chosen,' because God had foreseen that they would be holy and without spot; but in order that they might be made such." Again, "God did not (says he) choose us, because we believed; but in order that we might believe; lest *we* should appear to have first chosen *Him*. Paul loudly declares, that our very beginning to be holy, is the fruit and effect of election. They act most preposterously, therefore, who put election *after* faith." He farther observes, "When Paul lays down, as the sole cause of election, that good-pleasure of God, which He had in himself, he excludes all other causes whatsoever." Augustine, therefore, rightly admonishes us ever to go back to that first great cause of election, lest we should be inclined to boast of the *good-pleasure* of our *own will!*

Paul then proceeds to declare, that "God abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence; according to the riches of his grace; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which He hath purposed in himself." Thou hearest, in these words, reader, the grace of illumination, flowing, like a river, from the fountain of that eternal counsel, which had been before hidden. Far, very far, is this removed from the idea, that God had any respect to our faith in choosing us; which faith could not possibly have existed, except that God had then appointed it for us by the free grace of his adoption of us. And Paul farther confirms all this, by declaring that God was moved by no external cause,—by no cause out of himself,—in the choice of us; but that He himself, in himself, was the cause and the author of choosing his people, not yet created or born, as those on whom He would afterwards confer faith:—"According

to the purpose of Him (saith the apostle) who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Ephes. i. 11.)

Who does not see, that the eternal purpose of God is here set in diametrical opposition to our own purpose and will? This passage also was deeply weighed by Augustine: who, in his interpretation of it, observes, 'that God so works out all things, that He works also in us the very willingness by which we believe.' It is thus, I think, clearly brought out and proved, who they are, whom God calls by the Gospel to the hope of salvation; whom He engrafts into the body of Christ, and whom He makes heirs of eternal life;—that they are those whom He had adopted unto himself, by his eternal and secret counsel, to be his sons: and that He was so far from being moved by any faith, in them, to come, thus to adopt them, that this his election is the cause and the beginning of all faith in them; and that, therefore, election is, in order, before faith.

Equally plain and manifest is that which we have in the eighth chapter of the apostle's Epistle to the Romans. For after He had said, that all things work together for good, (or are a help,) to the faithful who love God,—that men might not trace the source of their happiness to themselves, or suppose, that by their *first* loving God, they had, by thus first loving Him, merited such goodness at his hands; the apostle, by way of correcting every error of that kind, immediately adds, "Who are the called according to his purpose." Whereby we see, that Paul is anxious to secure to God himself all the originating glory; for he shews, that it is He who, by his calling, causes men to love Him; who, of themselves, could do nothing but hate Him. For if you thoroughly examine the whole human race, what inclination will you find in any one of them by nature, to love God? Nay! Paul in this very same chapter declares, that all the senses of the flesh—the whole "carnal mind, is enmity against God." Now, if all men are, by nature, enemies to God, and his

adversaries, it is quite evident, that it is by his calling alone that some are separated from the rest, and caused to lay aside their hatred, and brought to love Him. Moreover, there can exist no doubt, that the apostle here designs that effectual calling, by which God regenerates those whom He had before adopted unto himself, to be his sons. For the apostle does not simply say, "who are the called:" (for this is sometimes applicable to the reprobate, whom God calls, or invites, promiscuously, with his own children, to repentance and faith:) but he says, in all fulness of explanation, "who are the called, according to his purpose:" which purpose must, from its very nature and effect, be firm and ratifying.

Now, to explain this text as applying to the purpose of man, is (as Augustine argues) absurd, in the extreme. Indeed, the context itself banishes every scruple; as if to render the intrusion of an interpreter wholly unnecessary. For the apostle immediately adds, "Whom He did predestinate, or definitively appoint, them He also called; and whom He called them He also justified." Here it is evident, that the apostle is speaking of a certain number, whom God destined for himself as a peculiar property and treasure. For although God calls very many, by many means, and especially by the external ministry of men; yet, He justifies, and at last glorifies, no one, but him whom He had ordained unto eternal life. The calling of God, therefore, is a certain special calling; which so seals and ratifies his eternal election, as to manifest openly, what was before hidden in God, concerning each one so called.

I know well, what are the cavillings of many here. They say, that when Paul affirms, that those were predestinated, whom God foreknew; he means, that each one was chosen, in respect of his future faith when he should believe. But I do not concede to these that which they falsely imagine:—that we are to understand, that God foresaw something in them, which would move Him to

confer upon them his favour and grace. For it is evident, that the elect of God were foreknown when, and because, they were freely chosen. Hence, the same apostle elsewhere teaches, that God *knoweth* them that *are his;* because, that is, He has them marked as it were, and holds them as numbered on his roll.

Nor is even this important point omitted by Augustine; —that by the term foreknowledge, we are to understand the counsel of God by which He predestinates *his own* unto salvation. Now that it was foreknown of God who should be heirs of eternal life no one will deny. The only question that can possibly arise, is this:—Whether God foreknew what He would do in them, or what they would be in themselves. But it is a piece of futile cunning, to lay hold on the term foreknowledge, and so to use that, as to pin the eternal *election* of God upon the *merits* of men; which election the apostle everywhere ascribes to the alone purpose of God. Peter also salutes the Church as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." Did he do this believing that some virtue in them foreseen of God gained them his favour? No! Peter is not comparing men with men, so as to make some of them better, or more worthy than others; but he is placing on high, above all other causes, that decree which God determined, in himself. As if he had said, that those to whom he wrote, were now numbered among the children of God, *because* they were chosen or elected of Him before they were born. On this same principle, he afterwards teaches, in the same chapter, that Christ was "verily foreordained before the foundation of the world" to be the Saviour, who should wash away, by his blood, the sins of the world: by which that apostle doubtless means, that the expiation of sin, completed by Christ, was preordained by the eternal counsel of God. Nor can that be otherwise explained, which we find in the sermon of Peter, recorded by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles;—that Christ was delivered to death "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of

God." Peter here joins "foreknowledge" to "counsel;" that we may learn, that Christ was not hurried away to death by any casualty, nor by the mere violent assault of men; but because the all-good and all-wise God, who knoweth all things, had thus purposely decreed it. Indeed, one passage of the apostle Paul ought to suffice for the end of all controversy, among those who have really a sound mind. He says, "God hath not cast away his people, which He foreknew." And what that foreknowledge was he shortly after explains: where he says, that a "remnant according to the election of grace" were saved. And again, that Israel did not obtain by works that which they sought after; but that "the election" did obtain it. Now that which in the former passage he called foreknowledge, he here, afterwards, defines to be election; and that gratuitous and free.

The fiction of Pighius is puerile and absurd, when he interprets grace to be God's goodness in inviting all men to salvation, though all were lost in Adam. For Paul most clearly separates the *foreknown*, from those on whom God deigned not to look, in mercy. And the same is expressed, without any obscurity, in the memorable words of Christ, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Here we have three things, briefly, indeed, but most perspicuously expressed:—First, that all who come unto Christ, were before given unto Him by the Father; secondly, that those who were thus given unto Him were delivered, as it were, from the hand of the Father into the hand of the Son, that they may be truly his; thirdly, that Christ is the sure keeper of all those, whom the Father delivered over to his faithful custody and care; for the very end, that He might not suffer one of them to perish. Now if a question be raised as to the beginning of faith, Christ here gives the answer; when He says, that those who believe, *therefore* believe, *because* they were given unto Him by the Father.

The unbelief of the Scribes was a great obstacle to the ignorant multitude; because they always persuaded them that no doctrine was worthy of belief, but that which was received under their sanction. On the other hand, Christ declares aloud, that that light by which we are guided into the way of salvation, is the gift of God. And if any one be inclined to turn his back upon the truth, that all those whom the Father chose in Christ, were given unto Him; it nevertheless remains fixed and a fact, that that gift was not only antecedent to faith, but the cause and origin of it. Now in the remaining member of the sentence of Christ,—"Shall come unto me," there is a more marvellous weight still. For He not only declares that none ever come to Him, but those to whom the hand of God is stretched out; but He asserts that all who were given unto Him by the Father, are, without exception, brought to believe in Him. And this He still more fully confirms in the context of his divine discourse. "No one" (says He) "can come unto me except my Father draw him."

Pighius will himself confess, that there is need of illumination to bring unto Christ those who were adversaries to God: but he at the same time holds fast the fiction, that grace is offered equally to all; but that it is ultimately rendered effectual by the will of man; just as each one is willing to receive it. Christ however testifies, that the meaning of his words is very different from this. For He adds, immediately afterwards, "There are some among you who believe not. Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." You here see, that Christ excludes those that "believe not," from the number of them who are "drawn." Now Christ would have uttered all this in vain, and out of place, if faith were not an especial gift of God. But that is the clearest of all which he conclusively adds, in continuation of his discourse.—After having cited the prophecy of Isaiah, "All thy children

shall be taught of the Lord;" he subjoins, by way of interpretation, "Every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Herein he shows, that the prophecy of Isaiah is then fulfilled, when God, by his Spirit, speaks to his children and disciples, *within;* in order that He may deliver them into the hands and possession of Christ. Isaiah defines this to be the manner in which God renews and increases his Church;—by teaching his children from above;—"and they shall be all taught of God." The prophet, therefore, is recording a peculiar favour of God: of which none are deemed worthy but his own children. Christ also here declares, by this his doctrine, that those are effectually drawn to Him, whose minds and hearts God "compels."

"Thus does God (saith Augustine) teach those *within*, who are 'the called according to his purpose:' at the same time giving them to know what they ought to do, and giving them the power to do what they know. He, therefore, who knows what he ought to do, and does it not, has not yet learned of God, according to grace, but according to the law only; not according to the spirit, but only according to the letter." And again a little afterwards, "If as 'the Truth' saith, 'Every one that hath learned cometh;' he that cometh not, most certainly hath not learned." At length the holy father arrives at this conclusion,—"It does not follow (saith he) that he who *can* come, *therefore does* come. The sacred matter is not perfected, unless he is *willing* to come, and *does* come. Now every one that hath learned of the Father, has not only the *power* to come, but *does* come." Here, therefore, we have the forward movement of the power, the affection of the will, and the effect of the act.

Nor do I thus adduce Augustine as a witness on this occasion, that I may fight my enemies under cover of his authority: but because I cannot find words more appropriate than his, wherewith to express the mind of Christ

in the Evangelist. If there be any, not yet quieted, he discusses the matter more fully elsewhere, thus,—"What doth Christ mean (argues he) when he says, 'Every one that hath learned of the Father cometh unto me?' (John vi. 45.) What is it, but as if he had said, 'There is no one who heareth and learneth of the Father, that cometh *not* unto me.' For if every one who hath heard and learned of the Father cometh (unto Christ); most certainly whoso cometh not unto Him, hath never heard nor learned. For if he *had* heard and learned, he would certainly come. This school of God is very far removed from all carnal sense and understanding. In it, the Father teaches, and is heard; that those who hear and learn may come to the Son."

A little farther on, Augustine observes, "This grace, which is secretly communicated to the hearts of men, is received by no heart that is hardened. Indeed, it is given for the very end, that the hardness of the heart may be first taken away. When, therefore, the Father is heard *within*, he takes away the 'stony heart' and gives 'a heart of flesh.' For it is thus that He makes *his own* the children of promise, and vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory. If it be asked, Why he does not thus teach all men, in order that they may come to Christ? the answer is, Because, those whom He does teach, He teaches *in mercy;* but those whom He does not teach, *in judgment* He teaches them not. For 'He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.'" (Rom. ix. 18.)

The sum of this sacred matter, however, may be compressed into a smaller compass still. Christ does not say that those are drawn by the Father who have a flexible heart given them to render them able to come to Him: but that those who do come to Him are they, whom God by his Spirit touches within; and who, under the efficacy of that touch, actually come. Now that this privilege is

not given to all promiscuously, is a fact which universal experience makes manifest, even to the blind.

And next, when Christ declares, that He will by no means cast out one of those who do come unto Him; nay, that the life of all such is hidden and kept in security, in himself, until He shall raise them up at the last day; who does not here see, that the final perseverance of the saints (as it is commonly termed) is in like manner ascribed to the election of God? It may be, and has been, that some fall from the faith; but those who are given to Christ by the Father are, as Christ himself declares, placed beyond the peril of destruction. In the same manner also, when, in another place, Christ had said that some of the Jews did not believe "because they were not of his sheep," He places, as it were, the sheep themselves in a sure haven of safety. "They shall never perish (saith He), neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand. My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Now Pighius will not, surely, dare to rest the safe state of the salvation of these sheep on their present faith! Yet he would suspend it all upon the free will of man!

Nor are we to consider it a point for ambiguous discussion, when Christ here sets Himself alone, as a sufficient protection against all the machinations of Satan; and when He declares, that we shall be safe, even unto the end; *because*, it is his will to save us. But that there might remain no doubt upon the subject, in any one's mind, as to the persons whom He does undertake, in his faithfulness, to protect and preserve, He calls our attention a second time to the gift of the Father; declaring both the *gift* of the Father, and the *teaching* of the Father. Nor should we pass, without especial notice, Christ's making the Father greater than all adversaries that can possibly oppose his people. Our Lord does it, that our confidence

in the security of our salvation, might be as great as our reverence for the power of God. For our security and God's omnipotence are equal: the former not being less than the latter. Wherefore, amidst all the violent assaults, all the various dangers, all the mighty storms, and all the shakings, convulsions, and agitations, with which we have to contend, the continuance and perpetuity of our standing lie in this;—that God will constantly defend that which He hath decreed in himself concerning our salvation, by the omnipotent power of his arm. If any one of us but look into himself, what can he do but tremble? For all things shake, to their centre, around us; and there is nothing more weak and tottering than ourselves. But since our heavenly Father suffers not one of those, whom He gave to his Son, to perish; as great as is his power, so certain is our confidence, and so great our glorying. And his omnipotence is such, that He stands the invincible vindicator of his own gift.

Hence, Augustine advisedly observes, "If any one of these should perish, God would be deceived. But no one of them ever does perish; because God never is or can be deceived.—If any one of these should perish, God is overcome and outdone by the sin of man. But no one of them ever does perish; because God can be conquered or outdone by nothing. The elect of God are chosen, that they may reign with Christ for ever. They are not like Judas, who was chosen to a temporary office only, for which he was naturally fitted." Again, "Of these not one perishes, because they are all chosen according to a purpose; not their own purpose, but God's. Seeing that there is not conferred upon them such a gift of perseverance, by which they may persevere if they will: but a gift by which they cannot but persevere." Augustine then confirms this by the following excellent argument.—"If, in the great weakness of this life (in the midst of which weakness there is nevertheless need of mighty power to keep down human vanity and pride;) men were

left to their own will, whether they would persevere or not, so that, under the helping power of God (without which they could not persevere at all;) they might stand still, if they pleased; and if God did not work in them that will; man's own will itself, would, amid such and so great temptations, sink under its own infirmity. And thus men could not persevere at all; because, sinking under their own weakness, they would not be willing to persevere, or, being willing, would not have the power. A remedy, therefore, is provided for the infirmity of human will, by its being caused to act, unceasingly and inseparably, under Divine grace. Thus, the human will, though infirm in itself, cannot fail nor be overcome by any infirmity of its own."

Now let that memorable passage of Paul (Rom. ix. 10, 11, 12, 13) come forth before us. This passage alone should abundantly suffice to put an end to all controversy among the sober-minded and obedient children of God. And although it is no wonder that that eyeless monster, Pighius, should mock, with contempt, the words of the apostle himself; yet I hope I shall bring all readers of a sound mind to abhor such barbarous audacity in profaning the Scripture, as this monster evinces.—As the Jews, priding themselves on the name of *the Church*, rejected, under this pretext, the Gospel of Christ, because it had been condemned by the consent of the (so called) Church; the apostle, to prevent the majesty of the Gospel from being overshadowed by such shameless pride, tears from the faces of these enemies of Christ, the mask, under cover of which they falsely boasted.—It was, indeed, a very great difficulty, and a formidable obstacle, in the way of the weak, when they saw the doctrine of Christ rejected by nearly all these very persons, whom God had appointed the heirs of his everlasting covenant. The apostles had all along preached that Jesus was the Messiah of God. But the whole of this nation, to whom the Messiah had been promised, opposed and rejected Him.

And what wonder! when at this very day, we see thousands totter, fail, and faint, frightened by this very Church-mask, which the Papists hold before their eyes, boasting themselves to be the Church!

The apostle, therefore, enters into the battle with the Jews, in this manner:—He by no means makes the fleshly seed, the legitimate children of Abraham; but counts the children of promise alone for the seed. Now he might have counted the seed, according to their faith. And that indeed would have been consistent, when, in reference to the promise, he was stating the difference between the genuine and the spurious offspring: and that, indeed, he had before done. But now, he ascends higher into the mind of God; and declares, that those were the children of promise, whom God chose before they were born. In proof of which, he cites that promise which was given by the angel to Abraham, "At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son (as if the apostle had added, before Isaac was conceived in the womb, he was chosen of God). And not only this, (saith the apostle,) but when Rebecca also had conceived by one (embrace), even by our father Isaac, (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger, As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Rom. ix. 10.)

Pighius would slide away, under the excuse, that this is one of the most difficult places of Scripture. And suppose I concede this; I do not thereby acknowledge, that his impious barking is to be endured, when he boastingly asserts, that it is a labyrinth in which no straight way can be found. What!—Are we to suppose, that the Holy Spirit speaking by the mouth of the apostle went out of his way or lost himself, so as to lead us aside, and beyond what it is useful or proper for us to know! It would have been very easy (as I have just said) for the

apostle to distinguish the true children of Abraham from the spurious ones, by the mark of faith alone. But he on purpose introduces the question of *election;* far higher and much farther removed. And most certainly as, according to his own record of himself, he had been carried up into the third heaven, and those secrets of God had been revealed to him, which it is not lawful for a man to utter; it must be evident, that he well knew how far it was expedient, and how far it was lawful, for him to go, in publishing the secret things of the Most High. When, therefore, he purposely carries the question to so great a height, and brings it down to so important a point, when it might have been settled in so general, brief, and compendious a manner; what godly person will hesitate to lend an attentive and teachable ear to what he testifies? Unless we are to entertain a supposition, that this furious, blind monster would restrain, by his great moderation (!) the Spirit of God himself, wantoning (in his own opinion) beyond due bounds! our very modest (!) opponent adds, "This is one of the portions of Scripture which unlearned and unstable persons corrupt to their own destruction." Now this is the very fact which, by the plainest proof, he forces us to declare concerning himself: so lawlessly does he twist and pervert the whole context of the Apostle Paul. And when he exhorts his readers to hold themselves obedient to the Church, in the interpretation of all such difficult passages of Scripture, he should have me a seconder of his grave admonition, if he would shew to his readers, as the Church, a sheepfold of Christ, and not a stinking sty of swine! For which is Pighius' Church but that vortex, formed of the congregated mass of all iniquities, and ever filling, but not yet full, of every kind of error?

Pighius' last admonition is, that his readers would admit nothing that is inconsistent with the infinite goodness of God; nor anything by which they might be incited to hate God rather than to love him. And yet,

he runs, full sail, directly against God; *because* He predestines some to destruction, from their very creation. But suppose the whole of this doctrine were suppressed, the reprobate would ever find occasion for hating God, and for assailing Him with their impious reasonings and arguments.—What real reason they have for their noisy opposition, shall be duly considered, in its place, when we shall have fully explained the mind of the apostle. At the present moment, let all those who are willing to be taught in the school of God, hear what the apostle plainly, and without any ambiguity, really says and means.

The apostle places before us the two sons of Isaac: who, when begotten together in the secret and sacred womb of nature, as in a temple of God, as it were, were nevertheless, while in the womb together, separated, by the oracular word of God, to an entirely different destiny. Now the apostle assigns the cause of this difference (which otherwise might have been sought in the merits of the lives of these two children) to the hidden counsel of God; "that the counsel of God might stand."—We here distinctly learn, that it was determined of God to choose one only, out of these two children. And yet Pighius, by a senseless cavil, as by a hog's snout, tries to root up these words of the apostle, with all their positive plainness of meaning.—He replies, that the election of grace here means, that Jacob had merited no such thing beforehand. But since the apostle commends this electing grace of God, on the very ground that, while the one was elected, the other was rejected; the vain fiction of Pighius, concerning universal grace, falls to the ground, at once.—The apostle does not here simply say, that Jacob was appointed heir of life, that the election of God might stand; but that his brother being rejected, his brother's birthright was conferred on *him*. I am fully aware of what some other dogs here bark out, and what are the murmurings of many ignorant persons;—that the testimonies of the apostle which we have cited, do not

treat of *eternal* life, nor of *eternal* destruction, at all. But if such objectors held the true principles of theology, in any degree, (which ought to be well known by all Christian men,) they would express their sentiments with a little less confidence and insolence. For the answer of God to Rebecca's complaint, was designed to shew her, that the issue of the struggling, which she felt in her womb, would be, that the blessing of God, and the covenant of eternal life, would rest with the younger. And what did the struggling itself signify? but that *both* the children could not be heirs of the covenant at the same time, which covenant had already, by the secret council of God, been decreed for the *one?*

Objectors here allege, that this covenant and its decree referred to Canaan: on which the Prophet Malachi dwells (Malachi i. 1, 2, 3). And indeed this objection might be worthy of notice, if God had designed merely to fatten the Jews, in Canaan, as pigs in a sty. But the mind of the Prophet is very different from this. God had promised that land to Abraham, as an outward symbol or figure of a better inheritance; and had given it to Abraham's posterity for a possession; that he might there collect them together as a peculiar people unto Himself; and might there erect a sanctuary of his presence and grace.—These great ends and objects are those, which the Prophet is revolving in his deep and reflective mind. In a word, the Prophet is holding Canaan to be the sacred habitation of God. And as Esau was deprived of this habitation, the Prophet sacredly gathers, that he was hated of God: because he had been thus rejected from the holy and elect family; on which the love of God perpetually rests. *We* also, with the Prophet, must carefully consider the particular nature of that land, and the peculiar quality which God assigns to it,—that it might be a certain earnest or pledge of that spiritual covenant which God entered into with the seed of Abraham. It is in full sacred point, therefore, that the apostle records, that the

free election of God fell upon Jacob; because, being yet unborn, he was appointed to enjoy the inheritance; while his brother was, at the same time, rejected. But Paul is proceeding much farther still in his sacred argument; and maintaining, that this inheritance was not obtained by works, nor conferred on Jacob from any respect to works which he should, in his after-life, perform. Nor is even this all.—The apostle expressly declares, that the brothers were thus separated, and this difference made between them, before either of them had done any one thing good or evil. From these facts the apostle solemnly settles it, that the difference made between the children, was not from any works whatever, but from the will of Him that called.

Here, Pighius thrusts upon us that rancid distinction of his;—that works performed were not, indeed, taken into the Divine consideration (for no works as yet existed); but, that the election of God was ratified in the person of Jacob, because God foresaw what his faith and obedience would be. And he philosophizes, in a most ingenious way, on the name Israel;—that Jacob was so named from *seeing God:* that we may know, that those are true Israelites, (not, who are blind from their own malice and wickedness, but blind only with respect to God;) and who, when God presents himself to be seen by them, open their eyes. But is it not a most ridiculous circumstance? that while this being is anxious to make others so clear-sighted, he should himself be blinder than a mole? An utterly different etymology is that, which is given us by Moses! He says, the name Israel was given to Jacob by the angel with whom he wrestled, and came off victorious. For ISRAEL signifies, "having power with God," or, "prevailing over God."

But whose eyes, I pray you, will this mortal be able so to pierce, or tear out, as to prevent them from seeing his absurdities?—Why does Paul so particularly say, that the children had done neither good nor evil? but, that he

might do away with all respect of merit in them?—Why? but that he might positively affirm, that God drew his reasons from no other source, than from his own mind and will, when He pronounced so different a judgment on the twin brothers? I well know how common a scape-way this supposed respect of merit, present or future, in the mind of God, is. But I would first of all ask this question,—If Esau and Jacob had been left to the course of their common nature, what greater amount of good works would God have found in the latter, than in the former? Most decidedly, the hardness of a stony heart, in both, would have rejected salvation when offered. "But, (says Pighius) a flexible heart was given to both of them, that they might be able to embrace the offered grace; but the one was willing to do what, by his free will, he could do; the other refused to do it." As if the apostle were testifying, that the unwillingness and refusal of Esau, were also given of God! And as if God did not promise *to cause* his Israel to walk in his commandments!

According to the judgment of Pighius, however, John loudly denies that God gives us the "power to become the sons of God." Now this crazy fellow is, first of all, utterly out, in taking "power" to mean faculty, or ability: whereas, it rather signifies *a worthiness of*, or *right or title to*, honour. But he betrays a more than gross stupidity, when he passes over, as with his eyes shut, the *cause* of this "power," so clearly described by the Evangelist; who declares, that those become the sons of God, who receive Christ; and he asserts, directly afterwards, "that these are born, not of flesh, nor of blood, but of God." God, therefore, deems those worthy the honour of adoption, who believe in his Son; but whom he had before begotten by his Spirit: that is, those whom He had formed for himself to be his sons,—those He at length openly declares to be such. For if faith makes us the sons of God; the next step of consideration is,—where does faith come from?—who gives us that? It is the

fruit of the seed of the Spirit, by which God begets us again to a newness of life.

In a word, most true is that which Augustine testifies; —" that the redeemed are distinguished from the children of perdition by grace alone: which redeemed ones, that common mass of original corruption would have gathered to the same perdition, but for the free grace of God. Whence it follows, that the grace of God to be preached, is that by which He *makes* men his *elect*, not that by which He *finds* them such." And this the same holy father continually inculcates. To this it may be added,— If God foresees anything in his elect, *for which* He separates them from the reprobate, it would have been quite senseless in the apostle to have argued, that it was " not of works but of Him that calleth," *because* God had said, " the elder shall serve the younger," when the children were not yet born. Wherefore, this vain attempt to solve the difficulty of God's eternal predestination, by introducing the idea of his *foreseeing* works and merits in the *future lives* of the elect, is openly insulting to the Apostle Paul, and to his divine testimony. Paul concludes that no respect of works existed in God's election of his people; *because* He preferred Jacob to his brother before they were born; and before they had done " either good or evil." But these opponents of election, to make good their doctrine, that those were chosen of God whom some mark of goodness distinguished from the reprobate; would make it appear, that God foresaw what disposition there would be in each person to receive or to reject offered grace. And suppose the apostle's expression " not *having* done either good or evil " be received by these men; yet God, by their doctrine, will still be electing according to works: because his election will depend on future works foreseen by him. But since the apostle takes that for a confessed fact, which is wholly disbelieved by these excellent theologians,—that all men are alike unworthy, and the nature of all equally corrupt; he securely concludes,

that God elected those, whom He did elect, from his own good-will and purpose; not because He foresaw they would be obedient children to Him. The *apostle*, moreover, is deeply considering what the nature of men would be without the election of God. But *these men* are dreaming of what good God foresaw in man; which good never could have existed, unless He himself had wrought it.

Although these things are in themselves abundantly clear: yet the context of the apostle leads us much deeper still into this holy matter. It thus proceeds:—"What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" Now, either this supposed objection, is introduced without any reason whatever, or else, the doctrine of Paul gives no place for works foreseen. For what suspicion of injustice can possibly be conceived, where God offers grace equally to all, and permits those who become worthy of it to enjoy it? In a word, when these objectors place the *cause* of election or reprobation in the works of men's coming lives; they seem to escape and to solve, quite to their own satisfaction, this very question which Paul supposes them to put, in objection. Whence it is fully evident, that the apostle was not instructed in this new wisdom. For, be it so, that the apostle introduces these men quarrelling with the justice of God, quite out of place, and without any colour of reason. Let us mark the manner in which he repels the objection he supposes to be made;—"God forbid! For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

Nothing, that I see, will be more appropriate than my using, here, the words of Augustine in explanation of this passage: "It is marvellous (saith he) to observe into what gulphs our adversaries precipitate themselves to avoid the nets of truth; when they find themselves hemmed in by these mighty straits. They say, that God hated the one of these children, and loved the other, when not yet born, *because* He foresaw what the works of their

future lives would be. What a wonder is it that this acute view of the mind of God, in the mighty matter, should quite escape the apostle! He saw no such thing; no such easy solution of the difficulty as the view of his adversaries intended. His answer implies that the matter was not so brief, so plain, so *evidently* true, so absolutely clear as these opponents imagined. For when he had put forth so stupendous a matter, for our meditation as this; how it could be rightly said concerning two children not yet born, nor having done either good or evil, that God loved the one and hated the other; he briefly and solemnly adds, 'What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?' Now here was the place to introduce the interpretation invented by our adversaries—'*Because* God foresaw their future works.' The apostle, however, does nothing of the kind. On the contrary, that no one might dare to boast of the merits of his works, he commends the grace of God alone, by the introduction of that all-conclusive word of God to Moses. 'For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.' Where are merits now! Where are works either past or future, either fulfilled, or to be fulfilled, as by the power or strength of free-will! Does not the apostle openly declare his mind in commendation of free grace only?" Thus far have I considered the words of Augustine.

But suppose for a moment that the apostle had introduced no such argument as that concerning the two sons of Isaac. (And indeed, if the solution is so plain and satisfactory,—that God made the difference between the two children from a respect to their future works, why should the apostle have entangled himself deeper, and asserted that the cause of the difference made, rested in the will of God alone?) Yet, God had, at the first, in his conversation with Moses, claimed to himself the free right of exercising his mercy as, and towards whom, He pleased. And this He did, that no one might dare to prescribe a

law for *his* actions. He then openly declared that He would take out of the whole multitude of the people, whom He would, and would deliver them: and all were alike covenant-breakers. He did not say that his choice of them should depend on themselves;—that if He should find any worthy of pardon He would be merciful to *such.* But he positively declared, that He would be the Master, Lord, and Arbiter, of his own mercy; that He would spare whom He would spare, as being bound by no necessity to choose either one or another.—And the apostle next infers, that which of necessity follows from the above declaration of God to Moses;—that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." For if the salvation of men depends on the mercy of God alone, and if God saves none but those whom He chose by his own secret good pleasure; there can, absolutely, be nothing left for men to do, will, or determine, in the matter of salvation.

Now Pighius explains the solemn case thus;—that salvation is not due to any endeavour of ours, nor to any works of ours, for *this* reason;—*because* God *freely calls* us to that salvation. He amuses himself with his opinions quite securely: imagining that he can, by one word of his, easily do away with the whole doctrine of the apostle, at once. Whereas, Paul's conclusion is derived thus;—*because* God elects those whom He saves by his own absolute good pleasure, and not from any difference of works in *their* lives from the works and lives of others; *therefore,* "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy:" thus making the whole, turn on the mercy of God alone. But Pighius thinks that he has made a clean escape when he talks about grace being extended to all; whereas it is due to no one. And when he says, that those become partakers of grace, whom the Lord finds well disposed and obedient to Him; he is forced, at last, to fall back on this acknowledgment;—that both the "willing" and the "running" do, indeed, avail, something; but that,

since they are not sufficient of themselves, the palm must, indeed, be given to the mercy of God.

All these absurdities the same Augustine refutes, most admirably.—"If (says he) Moses *therefore* says, 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy;' *because* it proceeds from both; that is, both from the will of man and the mercy of God; this is the same as saying, The will of man alone is not sufficient, unless the mercy of God be added to it: nor is the mercy of God alone sufficient, without the addition of the will of man. Moreover, if no Christian man dares say, It is not of God that showeth mercy, but of man that willeth; it evidently follows, that we must understand, that it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth: in order that the whole glory may be ascribed to God; who prepares the will of man, when made good, to be aided by him, and who aids it when thus prepared. More absurd still, therefore, is the cunning device of certain ones, who spin, out of these important questions, a conclusion, that there is a kind of concurrence, or half-way meeting, between the mercy of God and the endeavours of man.—As if Paul meant, that men can do very little by running, unless assisted by the grace of God! Whereas, the apostle reduces all things else to nothing, that he may give empty and whole place to the mercy of God. For whence is the beginning of all right running? Can any one, of himself, go to meet God? Can he do it, until led and directed by the Holy Spirit?"

Here again, let me adopt the language of Augustine. "There are daily *drawn* unto Christ (says he) those who were his enemies. 'No one can come unto me (says Christ,) except my Father draw him.' He does not say 'lead him;' as if the will of man, in some way, preceded; for who is *drawn*, that is already *willing to go?* But he that is chosen of God is drawn, in a wonderful way, by *Him*, who knoweth how to work in the hearts of men. Not that they may be made to believe against their wills,

or unwillingly; but that *they* may be *made* willing, *who*, before, were unwilling. Hence we see, that a man's eternal *election* of God, is proved by this subsequent '*running:*' yet so proved, that God's mercy alone, (which lifts up those that are down, and brings back the wandering into the way, nay, which raises the dead to life, and calleth things to be, which are not,) hath the pre-eminence."

We have next to consider the remaining members of the apostle's sentence, concerning the reprobate. Of these Paul brings before us Pharaoh, as the most signal instance. For God himself thus speaks of him, by Moses, "And in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power." This passage the apostle has faithfully rendered; giving as it were word for word, thus,—"Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee." The verb used is HIPHIL; derived from the root AMAD, which signifies 'to stand.' Pharaoh, therefore, is declared to be put forth openly and prominently, as one whom God might make a memorable example of his power. Now whence (or from what state or condition) did God receive Pharaoh, in order that He might place him in that position? Pighius would have it, that God *sustained* him by *his power*, for a time, *when deserving of death.*—Suppose I should permit him to take refuge under such a cover of escape; he is still entangled and held fast in the fact, that God, leaving Pharaoh to his own will and inclination, destined him to destruction.

If Pighius be anxious here, to dwell upon the long-suffering of God, I fully agree with him; this fact, nevertheless, remains fixed and unaltered;—that the reprobate are set apart, in the purpose of God, for the very end, that in them God might show forth his power. And that the longsuffering of God is, in the present instance, far removed from the apostle's mind and argument, is evident from his immediate inference; when he

observes, "Whom He will, He hardeneth." He would not have added this unless, under the expression "raised thee up," he had meant to comprehend that purpose of God, by which Pharaoh was ordained to magnify, by his obstinacy, the redemption of God's people, Israel. For if any one should say, that Pharaoh's being "raised up" signified his being raised from above to the summit of kingly honour; that indeed is some part, but not the whole, of the matter. For the LXX. Greek interpreters have here used the same expression as that by which they render the verb HIPHIL, derived from the radical KUM "to arise." Moreover, God is said to "raise up" that, which He causes, by an outstretched arm, as it were, to accomplish the end He has ordained. The Scripture here principally looks at the *beginning*, or *first-cause*, of that which it is recording; that it may ascribe the whole to God alone. In this same manner, God is also said to "raise up" prophets, and ministers of salvation; that no man might claim any of these things to himself, on the ground of his own industry. Therefore, the meaning of Moses has been faithfully expressed by the term, "raised up," if you will but so receive it; nor did Paul receive it otherwise. And most certainly, the expression "raised up" comprehends, not less distinctly than summarily, what he had touched upon, both concerning the elect, and the reprobate; since he is claiming for God the right and the power to have mercy on whom He will, and to harden whom He will, according to his own pleasure and purpose. The apostle *therefore* maintains, that the right of hardening, and of showing mercy, is in the power of God alone; and that no law can be imposed on him as a rule for his works; *because* no law or rule can be thought of, better, greater, or more just, than his own will!

But as some formerly would have it, that the apostle is here introducing the wicked railing against God; Pighius also flees to this refuge. And suppose this be granted to

him; the knot is by no means untied then. For in the first place, the apostle does not move a question about nothing. And in the next place, his answer is such, that he admits the objection of the adversaries to be true. And what does Pighius get by such shuffling as this? He only proves, by such quibbles, that his cause is a bad one. But who will be found to cede to him what he asks? when he thus violently sunders, on the one hand, things thus immediately connected together, and on the other, binds into one bundle, things manifestly separate and distinct? After the apostle had shown that God had made a distinction between the elect and the reprobate, by his incomprehensible will, He draws, in the same context, this inference;—"For He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy; and whom He will He hardeneth." To which he immediately subjoins, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault?" When Paul thus makes the persons speaking evidently plain and distinct, who would not rather attend to Paul's own words, than to any extraneous comments upon them? Augustine here also, as in many other instances, most wisely observes, "It signifies but little in whose person you receive that to be spoken, which the apostle, by his answer, implies to be true. If the objection had been false, it is not very likely that the apostle would have been silent, had the cause of the adversaries been so good, so clear, and so plausible. For if it be false, that God hardens whom He will; this knot, so insolvable by all human intellect, might have been settled by the apostle, in one word.

Pighius, under this view of the matter, pretends, that the apostle declined to give a plain and pointed answer, because he did not deem impudent persons worthy of being conversed with: that they might rather learn to think humbly, than proudly to require a reason for the works of God. Just as we elsewhere read, (says he) that the Jews, who asked Christ by what authority He did his

works, were repelled by a like question only. But the words of Paul himself stand directly against such a supposition. For he afterwards curbs the insolence of all those who indulge an audacious curiosity in scrutinizing the secrets of God. He maintains, however, while so doing, the fact, that the reprobate are vessels of the wrath of God, in whom He shows his power.

Augustine, therefore, reasons far differently from Pighius, and much more accurately, where he argues,—"When Paul had supposed the question to be put, 'Why doth He yet find fault?'—does he reply, That which thou hast said, O man, is false? No such thing. His answer is, 'Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?' What Augustine says elsewhere is worthy of notice. Paul (observes he) does not break off the discourse of the adversaries, by a severe reproof, when they are contending against God with profane petulance, as if the justice of God required a solemn defence: but he expresses himself in the way which he thought most expedient. Certain foolish persons consider that the apostle failed in his reply on this occasion: and that having no reason to give, he merely repressed the audacity of the opponents. But the apostle's words have inconceivable weight. 'Who art thou, O man?' In such questions as these, the apostle throws a man back into the consideration of what he is, and what is the capacity of his mind. This is a mighty reason rendered: in few words indeed, but in great reality. For who that understands *not* this appeal of the apostle, can reply to God? And who *that* understands it, can find anything *to* reply?

Wherefore (says Augustine elsewhere) "If these arguments of Paul have any weight with us, as men, let us also gravely listen to the apostle when he appeals to us, directly afterwards, in those striking words, 'Who art thou, O man?' &c. For although God did not create the *sins* of men, who but God did create the *natures* of men themselves? which are, in themselves, undoubtedly good;

but from which there were destined to proceed evils and sins, according to the pleasure of his will, and, in many, such sins as would be visited with eternal punishment. If it be asked, why did God create such natures? The reply is, Because He willed to create them. Why did He so will?—'Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?' If vain reasoners have anything more to say; Behold! a reason is here rendered to man! A reason sufficient for him; and all that is due to him; if indeed *he* will receive even this, who is disposed to contend for the liberty of his own will, while he is himself under the bondage of his own infirmity. But if a depraved desire to quarrel with God still frets any one; let such an one (saith Augustine) speak and hear as becometh man:—'Who art thou, O man?' But let him hear and not despise. And if any one be a despiser; let him believe himself to be 'hardened of God,' that he may despise. If any one despise not; let him believe that he is gifted and aided of God that he might not despise. But let the one believe that he is hardened according to his desert; the other, that he is helped according to grace."—And what the desert of man is, Augustine had before shown, in these words—"Every sinner is inexcusable: either on account of his original sin and sinful nature; or else from the additional act of his own will, whether he knew that he was sinning, or knew it not; whether he had a judgment of what is right, or had it not. For ignorance itself, in those who will not understand, is undoubtedly sin: and in those who cannot understand, ignorance is the punishment of sin."

But let the testimony of Augustine now aid us no farther. Ponder with me, readers, this momentous matter itself, by itself. Paul comparing, as he here does, man with God, shows that the counsel of God, in electing and reprobating men is, without doubt, more profound and more deeply concealed, than the human mind can penetrate. Wherefore, O man, consider (as the apostle

adviseth thee) who and what thou art; and concede more to God than the measure and compass of thine own nature. But suppose we give place, for a moment, to the philosophizing of Pighius;—that the condition of all men is equal, except in those who deprive themselves of eternal life; who, nevertheless, were elected, even as others. What would there be here obscure or difficult of solution? What would there be that common sense could not receive? What, that natural judgment could not make clear? But when you hear of a mystery surpassing all human understanding, you may at once conclude, that all solutions of men, derived from common natural judgment, and which might avail in a profane court of justice, are frivolous and vain. Here, however, Pighius attempts to meet us with the remark, that those are never repulsed of God, nor sent away in doubt, who humbly keep their minds in subjection; that therefore, those who thus contend against God, are the refractory and haughty only; and that such contention is found in none others. To this assertion I will assent, without difficulty; on condition, that Pighius confess, on his part, that the apostle condemns of impious pride all who measure the justice of God by their own comprehension. But that God may obtain the praise of his justice, He must, according to the judgment of Pighius, render a plain reason for everything he does. Whereas, our rule of modesty ought to be, that where God's reason for his works lies hidden, we should nevertheless believe Him to be just.

Now the son of Sirach is not ashamed to extol God with the praise, that, as a potter he separates and distinguishes vessels according to his will; and that men are also as clay in the hand of God who forms them, and who renders to them accordingly as he has decreed. For κρίσις, in this passage, if you compare it with what has preceded, cannot signify anything else than the good pleasure of the workman, or potter. Nor do we want to seek an interpreter beyond the apostle himself: who, under the

same figure, openly rebukes the audacity of all who require of God a reason for his works. "Shall the clay (demands the apostle) say unto the potter, Why hast thou made me thus?" He, therefore, will truly confine himself to the moderation of the apostle, who, holding the will of God, though hidden, to be the highest justice, gives to him the free power of destroying or saving whom He will. How much soever therefore Pighius may twist himself, in twisting the words of the apostle; he cannot make this similitude apply otherwise, in the present instance, than the apostle has applied it; who introduces it to show that God fashions and forms by his own right, all men, to whatever destiny He pleases and wills.

If this, at first appearance, should seem to any one out of the way or unintelligible; let him hear a farther admonition of the admirable Augustine. "If (says he) beasts could speak, and should quarrel with their Maker, because He had not made them men like us; there is not one of us who would not, in a moment, fly into a rage with them. What, then, do we think of ourselves? Who or what are we, that we should contend with God, for having made each of us what we are? That man is most certainly mad, who will not ascribe to God a far greater and higher excellency than that which he, and the human race, possess, above the beasts of the earth. What remains then, but that the sheep of God's flock quietly and peacefully submit themselves unto him?" This would be far more becoming, than, after the example of Pighius, to make men the potters instead of God; and to leave each one to shape out his destiny, by his own virtue.

But Pighius says, "What is here obscure is elsewhere made plain. As the furnace proves the vessels of the potter, so does temptation prove the just." This is true. But from this he concludes, that therefore if a just man shall be constant in faith and piety, he will be a vessel unto honour; but if he fail, through want of courage and constancy, he will be a vessel unto dishonour. And since,

according to his account, each one, by his own will, assisted by Divine grace, (which is common, he says, to all men, and prepared for all men,) at length perseveres; he concludes, that we are made vessels unto honour by our invincible fortitude. Now, I will not stop to observe how absurdly Pighius here confounds together two entirely different things; the forming of the vessel, and the proving of the vessel when formed; I would merely remark, that God's proving his own people by various trials and temptations, does not at all alter, or interfere with, his predestination of them by his eternal will and counsel, before they were born. Nor does it alter his forming them, from all eternity, such as He willed them to be afterwards in time. Nor does that passage of Paul in any way support these views of Pighius, where the apostle says, "If a man, therefore, shall purify himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour." Paul is not here shewing in what way men, extricated and cleansed from their filth, are made vessels unto honour; but how the faithful, who are already chosen and called, become adapted for the pure uses of God. And now, observe what an exact harmony there is between the mind of Pighius, and the mind of the apostle! Pighius' words are, "What is here obscure in the apostle, he elsewhere renders quite plain:—why and how it is, that God makes some vessels to honour and not others. Thus, in order that Jacob might be a vessel of mercy, his soul had purified itself: on which account, he was deservedly made a vessel unto honour: and it was thus that God, having a respect unto this self-purification, which He foreknew, loved and chose the patriarch before he was born."

So Pighius. Now hear Paul. He, on the contrary, when exhorting the faithful thus to purify themselves; in order to lay a "foundation" for this doctrine, prefaces it, by saying, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." In the same way, he elsewhere exhorts the people of God to holiness; by arguing,—"For we are his workmanship;

created unto good works, which God hath *before ordained* that we should walk in them." Paul, therefore, who, with all soberness of mind, glories in being a wise master-builder, lays the foundation of all salvation in the free grace of God alone.—Pighius, on the contrary, begins his building from the earth's plain surface; without any foundation at all. And in the same way, when handling that passage of Jeremiah (chap. xix. 11), he consumes a multitude of words to no purpose whatever. The prophet is not, in that passage, describing the origin of our formation; but he is asserting and maintaining God's rightful power, in breaking to pieces and destroying vessels, already formed and finished. The mind and intent of the apostle, therefore, in his use of this similitude, are to be carefully observed and held fast;—that God, the Maker of men, forms, out of the same lump, in his hands, one vessel, or man, to honour, and another to dishonour; according to his sovereign and absolute will. For He freely chooses some to life, who are not yet born; leaving others to their own destruction: which destruction all men, by nature, equally deserve. And when Pighius holds, that God's election of grace has no reference to, or connexion with, his hatred of the reprobate; I maintain that reference and connexion, to be a truth. Inasmuch as the just severity of God answers, in equal and common cause, to that free love, with which He embraces his elect.

The apostle then arrives at this conclusion.—"What if God willing to shew his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory?" This forms no ground or reason (means the apostle), that any one should question God, or contend with Him. Pighius here, (as those like him are wont to do,) seizes upon the word longsuffering. Nay, he dwells on that word with a

lofty boast, bordering on ferocity; as if God hardened not the elect otherwise, than by paternal indulgence, as it were. "God (says he) makes men vessels unto dishonour, in no other way, than by kindly enduring them while they are abusing his longsuffering, and treasuring up for themselves wrath against a day of wrath." What then becomes of the difference which God made between the two brothers, before they were born! If we are to believe Pighius, this difference was made, because God foresaw what the hardness of Esau's heart would be. How is it then, that the election of grace is so distinctly manifest in the case of Jacob, when Esau stood in the same grade and position with Jacob, until he excluded himself from the number of the children and family of Isaac? But this shifting and shuffling of Pighius is so utterly refuted by one very short sentence of the apostle Paul, that it is quite needless to go any farther, to fetch arguments for refutation. In what sense the Hebrews use the terms "vessels," and "instruments," every one knows, who has the least acquaintance with the Scripture. Wherever we hear of "instruments," we shall also find God concerned as the Author and Overruler of the whole that is done; while his hand directs the whole. And why are men called "vessels" of wrath? but because God shews towards such his righteous severity, which He abstains from shewing towards others? And why are they made "vessels of wrath?" Paul tells us.—That God might, in them, "shew forth his wrath and make his power known." The apostle says, that they were "fitted to destruction." When? and how? but from their first origin and primitive nature? For the nature of the whole human race was corrupted, in the person of Adam. Not that the still higher and deeper purpose of God did not precede the whole. But it was from this fountain, that the curse of God commenced its operation. From this source began, in effect, the destruction of the human race.

Correspondently, the apostle testifies, that God had "afore prepared" the "vessels of mercy" unto glory.

Now if this being "*afore prepared* unto glory" is peculiar and special to the elect; it evidently follows, that the rest, the non-elect, were equally "*fitted* to destruction:" because, being left to their own nature, they were thereby devoted already to certain destruction. That they were "fitted to destruction" by *their own wickedness*, is an idea so silly, that it needs no notice. It is indeed true, that the reprobate procure to themselves the wrath of God; and that they daily hasten on the falling of its weight upon their own heads. But it must be confessed by all, that the apostle is here treating of that difference made between the elect and the reprobate, which proceeds from the alone secret will and purpose of God. Paul says also, that the "riches" of God's "grace" are made known on the "vessels of mercy;" while, on the contrary, the "vessels of wrath" rush on to destruction. Most certainly, nothing is here heard of Pighius' absurd prating;—that grace is the same towards all, but that the goodness of God is the more brightly illustrated, by his enduring the vessels of wrath, while He suffers them to come to their own end. But with respect to God's *long-suffering*, the solution of its operation is perfectly plain. It is immediately connected with his *power*. God does not only permit a thing to be done, or to continue, by his longsuffering, but he rules and over-rules what is done by his Almighty power.

Nor on any other grounds than these, can that inviolable engagement of God stand, where He says, "I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God; merciful, to a thousand generations, but a severe avenger unto the third and fourth generation." This compact, I say, cannot stand, unless the Lord, by his own will, decree to whom He will show the mercy, and whom He will suffer to remain devoted to eternal death. He extends his grace (He

declares) even unto a thousand generations.—Now I would ask, Does God regard the children of the godly, according to their *own merits*, when He continues the grace that was shown to their fathers themselves, upon no other grounds, than because He had *promised that He would* do so?—To Abraham, who had deserved no such favour, God freely binds himself in faithfulness that He (God) for the patriarch's sake will be a God to his posterity. Hence that solemn appeal to God after the Patriarch's death. "Remember, Lord, thy servant Abraham." (Deut. ix. 27.) Here, most certainly, is made a choice of men, and a distinction between them: and that, not according to the merits of each, but according to the covenant made with their fathers. Not that all the posterity of Abraham, which descends from him according to the flesh, possesses this privilege; but the faith and salvation of all those only, who out of the seed of Abraham, are chosen unto eternal life, ought to be referred to this promise.

Exactly the same is the nature of that vengeance which God takes, even upon the third and fourth generation. As to what some allege,—that all who sin are punished, from age to age, each one in his day and order, that is a more than frivolous subterfuge. In this manner the Pelagians of old, finding that they could not disentangle themselves from the nets of those testimonies of the Scripture, which make it evident that all men sinned in Adam, fell a cavilling at the truth, and hatched the doctrine, that all the posterity of Adam sinned *by imitation of him*, not *through a total corruption of nature derived from him*. And as godly teachers then attacked them, truly maintaining that all were actually condemned on account of the sin and guilt of Adam, from which sin and guilt the grace of Christ alone frees them; so, in the present case, that the antitheses and parallels may agree with, and respond to, each other; it of necessity follows, that God avenges, in the persons of the children, the sins

which he condemned in their fathers. Nor can many other passages of the Scripture be otherwise explained; where God declares, that He "recompenses the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them." In vain do the opponents bring against us that passage of Ezekiel, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father: the soul that sinneth it shall die:" because, it forms one particular part of God's vengeance on sin, when He leaves men void and destitute of his Spirit. For being thus left destitute, each one bears the consequences of his own sin. Wherefore, the children are said to bear the sins of their forefathers; and not 'undeservedly,' (as the profane poet would intimate;) because, they are guilty, on the very ground, that, being (as the apostle says) the children of wrath, being thus left to their own natural will and inclination, and being, from their origin, the heirs of eternal death, they can do nothing but augment, in a perpetual and uninterrupted course, their own destruction.

We may here, most opportunely explain that passage of Isaiah, which the Holy Ghost has been pleased to repeat with a particular application, six times over, in the New Testament. The Prophet Isaiah is sent forth with a commission of prodigious awfulness, as it at first appears. "Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed; but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." The prophet being here represented as the minister of blindness arises, confessedly, from the nature of the office he had to execute, and from the effects, by which, it was certain, it would be followed. Our great question lies in *the cause* of that blindness. It will be also confessed to be a deserved punishment, inflicted on that ungrateful and rebellious people, that light, to them, should become darkness. And there had

moreover preceded, in them, a malicious and obstinate unbelief, which fully deserved to be visited with such a recompense. But as the prophet testifies, that there was a certain select number, on whom salvation shone from the preaching of the Word of God; the question to be solved is,—Did those favoured ones escape the horrible judgment which lay upon the rest, by any virtue of their own, or were they held safe and secure in the hand of God?

And a weightier question still, presses itself upon us.—How it came to pass that, out of that great multitude, *some* repented, while the disease of *others*, remained incurable!

If any one should weigh this in the balance of *human* judgment, he would decide, that *the cause* of the difference was in the men themselves. But GOD will not suffer us to stop here. He declares, that all those who do not follow the stream of the common ruin, are saved *by his grace*. Whether or not repentance is *his* own work, ought not to be brought into controversy. So evidently true is that which Augustine says;—"Those whom the Lord wills to be converted, he converts himself: who not only makes willing ones, out of them who were unwilling; but makes also sheep out of wolves, and martyrs out of persecutors; transforming them by his all-powerful grace." If the wickedness of man be still urged, as *the cause* of the difference between the elect and the non-elect; this wickedness might, indeed, be made to appear more powerful than that grace of God, which He shows towards his elect; if that solemn truth did not stand in the way of such an argument;—"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy!" But Paul's interpretation of the passage of Isaiah before us, leaves no doubt whatever remaining. For, after he had said that the election of God was determined and fixed; he adds, "But the rest were blinded, that that might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet," &c.

I grant that this blindness in the Jews was voluntary; and I freely acknowledge their sin therein. But I perceive who they are, whom Paul excepts from this blindness;—they are those whom it pleased God to choose out of the rest. But why did he choose some, rather than others? Let no one be offended then, that He still chooses, from time to time, some, and not others; and let *us*, like Paul, except these chosen ones from the general mass of those who are blinded. Nor let us ask the reason why God makes the difference. For as Paul says, it is not becoming man to contend with God. The same apostle, when speaking elsewhere to the Jews, from whose virulent malice he had so severely suffered, says, "Well spake the Holy Ghost, by Esaias the Prophet, unto our fathers; saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive." (Acts xxviii. 25, 26.) He charges their sin home upon them, accordingly as they fully deserved. Some persons will here erroneously and ignorantly conclude, that *the cause* and beginning of this obduracy, in the Jews, was their malicious wickedness. Just as if there were no deeper and more occult *cause* of the wickedness itself, namely, the original corruption of nature! And as if they did not remain sunk in this corruption, *because*, being reprobated by the secret counsel of God, before they were born, they were left undelivered!

Now let us listen to the Evangelist John. He will be no ambiguous interpreter of this same passage of the Prophet Isaiah. "But though (says John) Jesus had done so many miracles before them; yet they believed not on Him: that the saying of Esaias the Prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, &c.'" Now, most certainly, John does

not here give us to understand, that the Jews were prevented from believing by their sinfulness. For though this be quite true in one sense; yet *the cause* of their not believing must be traced to a far higher source. The secret and eternal purpose and counsel of God, must be viewed as the original cause of their blindness and unbelief. It perplexed, in no small degree, the ignorant and the weak, when they heard, that there was no place for Christ among the people of God (for the Jews were such). John explains the reason; by showing, that none believe, save those to whom it is given; and that there are few to whom God reveals his arm. This other prophecy, concerning "the arm of the Lord," the Evangelist weaves into his argument, to prove the same great truth. And his words have a momentous weight. He says, "*Therefore*, they *could not* believe." Wherefore, let men torture themselves as long as they will, with reasoning, the cause of the difference made,—(why God does not reveal his arm equally to *all*,)—lies hidden in his own eternal decree. The whole of the Evangelist's argument amounts, evidently, to this;—that faith is a special gift; and that the wisdom of Christ is too high and too deep to come within the compass of man's understanding. The unbelief of the world, therefore, ought not to astonish us; if even the wisest and most acute of men fail to believe. Hence, unless we would elude the plain and confessed meaning of the Evangelist,—that few receive the Gospel; we must fully conclude, that *the cause*, is *the will of God*; and that the outward sound of that Gospel strikes the ear in vain, until God is pleased to touch, by it, the heart within.

A different occasion for citing this passage of Isaiah presents itself to the other three evangelists, while they are each recording the life and ministry of our Lord. In Matthew, our Saviour separates and distinguishes his disciples from the common mass of men. He declares, that it was given to them (his disciples) to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but that he spoke to

others in parables; that hearing, they might hear, and not understand; that the saying of Isaiah might be fulfilled. Now I am willing to confess, that those to whom Christ spoke parabolically, were unworthy, in themselves, of greater light. But on the other hand, I would wish to ask, what greater merit, in themselves, had the apostles to be freely admitted into familiarity with Christ? into which familiarity Christ *did* freely admit them. Here the antithesis is clearly established; that grace was freely conferred on few; when it might have been, with justice, denied equally to all. For shall we say that the apostles procured for themselves, by their own merits, that which the Lord declares was freely "given" to them? Nor are we to pass by, without particular remark, that the Saviour terms the things, which he taught them "mysteries." And most certainly, there is nothing, in the whole circle of spiritual doctrine, which does not far surpass the capacity of man and confound its utmost reach. No explanation by words, therefore, however lucid, will suffice to make the mysteries of the kingdom of God understood, unless the Holy Spirit, at the same time, teach within. But Christ would have his disciples to magnify it, as a precious pledge of the favour of God toward them, that He honoured them above the common mass of men, in blessing them with the external means of teaching. Though he was, all the while, gradually leading them to that high and singular privilege, which distinguishes "friends" from "servants;" as John hath it, (John xv. 15,) "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." These friends are thus taught from above, to the very end, that they might understand those things which are beyond all natural comprehension. Hence it was, that Christ, on such occasions as these, so frequently uttered that loud appeal, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." By which expres-

sion, Christ not only distinguished attentive, from inattentive, hearers; but He implied also, that all are deaf, save those, whose ears God is pleased to bore that they may hear: which divine blessing David magnifies in the name of the whole Church of God (Psalm xl. 6), "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened."

But I will proceed no farther with discussing the several portions of God's Word relative to this divine and deep matter. Let this summary suffice.—If we admit the same Spirit of God, who spoke by the apostles, to be an interpreter of the prophet Isaiah; we must also acknowledge, that that secret and incomprehensible judgment of God, which blinds the greater part of mankind "that seeing they may see and not perceive, &c.," is to be adored, while it does so.—Here let human reasonings of every kind that can possibly present themselves to our minds, cease for ever. For if we confine our reflections to men, apart from the grace and eternal purpose of God; the first thing that will strike us is, that God gives freely to those that ask Him; and that others sink and die under their need; for which they do not seek a remedy. But if we have not, in our mind and understanding, that which Augustine saith,—'that the nature of the Divine goodness is, not only to open to those that knock, but also *to cause* them to knock and ask,'—unless, I say, we understand this, we shall never know the real need under which we labour.

If we come to *the help;* universal experience proves, that all do not comprehend that power of the Holy Spirit, by which everything is done that ought to be done. Let no one deceive himself by vain self-flattery. Those who come to Christ, were before sons of God, in his divine heart; while they were, in themselves, his enemies. And *because* they were pre-ordained unto eternal life, they were *therefore* given unto Christ. Hence the faithful admonition of Augustine, "Let those who thus come to

Christ, remember, that they are "vessels" of grace not of merit. For grace is in them, all merit. Nor let us delight in any other knowledge than that which begins and ends in admiration. Let those decide as who will: if God but give his nod of assent from heaven to our stupidity, as men think, and if angels do but applaud it!"

We will now, in a summary way, collect those correctnesses of Pighius; which seem to carry with them any kind of colour: that our readers may understand, that the *weapons* with which our antagonist fights, are quite as bad as the *cause* which he alleges for kindling the flame of so mighty a contest.—He asserts, that the whole question turns on this;—to *what end* man was created. And, in the first place, he holds it as a great absurdity, to suppose, that God expected any *return* from the creation of man: since, being content in himself alone, He could want *no one* else, nor *anything* else.

I also confess, that God has no need of any external aid, prop, or addition: but I deny the justness of the conclusion that, *therefore*, he had no respect or consideration of himself, when he created man for his own glory. For what meaneth that word of Solomon, "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. xvi. 4.)? Wherefore we evince no absurdity when we say, that God, though needing nothing to be added to himself, yet created the race of men for his own glory. And this ought to be considered, and most deservedly so, the great and essential end of man's creation. The sophism of Pighius, therefore, is the more ridiculous, when he reasons, that God could have no respect of himself in the creation of man, because He is, in himself, infinitely perfect. It is quite curious to observe how our opponent wriggles himself out of the net in which the above word of Solomon entangles him. "God (he says) did indeed make all things for himself; not, however, with any reference to his own glory, but because of the infiniteness of his goodness." And that this absurd

interpretation may not want abundance of weight; he asserts, that no commentators agree with me, except a few detestable heretics (as he terms them). Now why should I waste time on the refutation of such futile absurdities as these?—The Hebrew word LAMAAUIHU, which Solomon uses, has the same meaning as our expression, "for his own sake." One person, inflated with his half-Latin gabble, is anxious to explain to us the meaning of the adverb *propter*. Whereas, if he had but one spark of a sound mind, the context itself would clearly demonstrate to him, that "the wicked were made for the day of evil," only because it was God's will to shew forth in them his glory: just as, elsewhere, God declares that He raised up Pharaoh, for the very cause that, in him, He might shew forth his power and name to all the nations of the earth.

To give some colour to his absurd error, Pighius introduces the testimony of Moses, where he appeals to the Jews, in those words, "And now, O Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee? but to love him, and to worship him?" What one of my readers is so senseless, as not to see, at once, that we have here a man, destitute of a sound mind, blattering without the least modesty? I am sure there is not such a reader of these pages. What! does God desire to be worshipped by us, more for our sakes, than for his own? Is his regard for his own glory so buried out of his sight, that He regards us, alone? What then is to become of all those testimonies of the Scripture which make the glory of God to be the highest object and ultimate end of man's salvation? Wherefore, let us hold fast this glorious truth;—that the mind of God, in our salvation, was such as not to forget himself, but to set his own glory in the first and highest place; and that He made the whole world, for the very end, that it might be a stupendous theatre whereon to manifest his own glory. Not that He was not content in himself; nor that He had any need to borrow addition

from any other sources; but it was his good pleasure so highly to honour his creatures, as to impress on them the bright marks of his great glory.

After commencing with so much success (!) Pighius subjoins another end, which God had, in the creation of man.—Having a respect, (he says) to the nature of his own goodness, God wished to create a rational creature, capable of receiving that goodness: which, (he adds) could not be done without his bestowing on that creature freedom of will. This being admitted, he considers all my teaching to fall to the ground at once; when I maintain, that God decreed a difference between the elect and the reprobate. Because man, (he argues) being thus made, by his free-will, the arbiter of his future state, had either event, the good or the evil, (to be saved or to be lost), in his own hand.

Now in the first place, readers are here to be admonished and exhorted, ever to hold God, their Maker and Creator, in that highest of all honour which is due to Him; and never to exercise an insolent or forward eye, when considering his purpose in the creation of the human race; but to view Him with reverence and soberness, and with the pure eye of faith. I know full well, that no mention whatever can be made of God's eternal predestination, but, in a moment, numberless unholy and absurd thoughts rush into the mind. Hence it is, that many over-modest persons are found, who wish that the glorious doctrine of predestination were never named at all; lest occasion should thereby be given to wanton minds to exalt themselves against God. I, however, passing by all such over-careful speculations, and leaving them to others, consider it unjustifiable, in a Christian man, thus cautiously to keep back the genuine confession of the truth, lest it should be exposed to the grin of the profane. For in the first place there is nothing more precious to God than his truth. In the next place, He will not have his justice to be protected by our dissimulation. And finally, it needs

no such protection. On these points, however, we shall dwell more fully hereafter. I will, now, briefly reply to Pighius on the point more particularly in question.

Pighius contends that men were so immediately created unto salvation that no counsel of God concerning the contrary event, namely, his destruction, preceded his creation. As if the Lord did not foresee, before man was created, what his future condition would be! And as if He did not afore determine what it was his will should be done! Man, that he might be the image of God, was adorned from the first with the light of reason and with rectitude of nature. *Therefore* (as our opponent would reason) God being (to speak reverently) blind, foresaw not all events, but waited, in doubt and suspense, for the issue of those events! Such is Pighius' theological reasoning! Such are the *antecedents* and *consequents* of his logic! Hence he boldly concludes, from *his* view of the end of man's creation, that God so disposed the creation of all men that they should all, at their creation, be made, (without distinction, difference, or discrimination,) partakers of his goodness and blessedness. But godly minds can by no means whatever be brought to reconcile God's election and reprobation of men thus. They cannot harmonise, by such carnal reasoning, the voluntary sin of man, and the eternal purpose of God. They cannot see, with these human eyes, how it was, that man should be placed in that condition, when first created, that he himself, falling by his own will, should be the cause of his own destruction; and yet that it was so ordained, by the secret and eternal purpose of God, that this voluntary destruction to the human race, and to all the posterity of Adam, should be a cause for the saints humbling themselves before God, and worshipping his eternal purpose, in the whole. For although it pleased God thus to ordain the whole; yet, man did not the less willingly, on his part, hurl himself into this headlong ruin: who, nevertheless, had been endued with an upright nature, and had been made in the

image of God. But I would repeat my being perfectly aware, how much absurdity and irreconcilable contradiction, these deep things seem, to profane persons, to carry with them. Nevertheless, let one conscience suffice us in the place of a thousand such witnesses. To which conscience, if we duly listen, we shall be ashamed not to confess, that man perished justly; seeing that he chose rather to follow Satan, than God!

But let us now hear Pighius' PROOFS of his above views, arguments, and conclusions. In these he labours to shew, that salvation was ordained for all men, without distinction or difference. "If it were not so, (he says) the Holy Spirit speaks falsely when he declares that God is the Father of all men." (Mal. ii. 10.) The Prophet is there treating of marriage: the faith of which many husbands, at that time, violated. Malachi is reminding such violators, that God is the avenger of conjugal fidelity. Let our readers hence gather, how much religion and conscience Pighius has, in dealing with the Holy Scripture! He then adds, from the Psalm, "The Lord is good to all" (Ps. cxlv. 9): from which he concludes, that, *therefore*, all were ordained unto eternal life. Now if this be true, the kingdom of heaven is open for dogs and asses! For the Psalmist is not magnifying that goodness of God only, which he shews to man; but that also, which he extends to all his works. But why should not Pighius thus fight for his *brethren!*

Then follows a *third proof;* that, according to Paul, "There is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile." (Rom. x. 12.) Now all this I receive most fully; provided there be but added what the same apostle teaches;—that the Gentiles were called to a participation of the Gospel, because they were ordained thereto by the eternal counsel of God. (Rom. xvi. 26.) He cites also that passage in Ecclesiasticus, "God hateth nothing that he hath made." As if we had not always maintained that God hateth nothing, in us,

that is his own; save that fallen nature only, which may be justly called a deformity of the first creation. The great question of reprobation, however, by no means turns on this hinge;—whether or not God hateth anything that He hath made! For although, long before the fall of Adam, God had, for secret reasons of his own, decreed what He would do; yet, we read in the Scripture, that nothing was, or is, condemned by him, but sin.

There flows from these premises, therefore, the plain and solid conclusion, that God had just causes, for reprobating a part of mankind; causes, however, hidden from us; but that He hates and condemns nothing in man, except that which is contrary to his justice. The next Scripture which he tacks on to his argument, is that of Paul; who declares, he says, that God "included all under sin, that He might have mercy upon all." (Rom. xi. 32.) As if Paul in this passage were disputing about the *number* of men! Whereas he is abstractedly lauding the grace of God towards *all* of *us* who attain unto salvation. Most certainly nothing was less in the mind of the apostle than an extension of the mercy of God to all men. His sole object was to prostrate all glorying of the flesh; that we may clearly understand that no man will ever be saved but he whom God saves by grace alone. Behold, then, with what glorious arguments our opponent demonstrates that none are chosen unto salvation from above, in preference to others! And yet this ape of Euclid puffs himself off, in the titles of all his chapters, as a first-rate reasoner.

The third end of man's creation which is so clearly and powerfully expressed by Solomon (The Lord hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil, Prov. xvi. 4), Pighius attacks in this way.—With reference to God's condemnation of the reprobate, and his punishment of sin; he argues, "If we say that God in his eternal decrees had any respect to what would happen to each person, *after* his creation, we must necessarily confess, that the *discrimination* between the elect and the

reprobate, was, in the Divine mind, *antecedent* to the fall of man. Whence it will follow, that the reprobate are not condemned, *because* they were ruined in Adam; but *because* they were already devoted to destruction, even before the fall of Adam."—To this witless argument I reply, What wonder is it that Pighius should thus, (to use his own expression,) *indiscriminately* confound all things, in reference to the deep judgments of God, when he knows not how to make the least distinction between *remote* and *proximate* CAUSES! After men have looked this way and that way, they can never, by so doing, fix upon the *cause* of their destruction; nor upon the fault that produced it. And why? because the *proximate* fault rests with themselves. And should they complain, that the wound is inflicted on them from some other quarter; the internal sense of their mind will bind them fast to the conclusion, that the evil arose from the voluntary defections and fall of the first man.—I know full well, that the insolence of the carnal mind cannot be prevented from immediately bawling, "If God foreknew the fall of Adam, and yet, was unwilling to apply a remedy; we are rather perishing, in our innocence, by his bare external decree, than suffering the just punishment of our sin." And suppose we grant that nothing was in this way foreseen of God, or thus viewed by Him; the old complaint, concerning original sin, will still be made, and as loud as ever;—"Why was not Adam left to sin for himself, as a private individual, so as to bear the consequences alone? Why was he made to involve *us*, who deserved no such calamity, in a participation of the same ruin? Nay, under what colour of justice does God visit on *us* the punishment of *another's* fault?" But, after all has been said, that can be said, on the subject; the internal feeling of every man's heart continues to urge its conviction: nor will it suffer any child of Adam to absolve himself (even himself being his own judge) from the sin, the guilt, or the punishment, consequent on the *original transgression* of Adam! Nor can any one, in truth, raise

a controversy on the matter. For as, on account of the sin of one man, a deadly wound was inflicted on all men; all men at once acknowledge the judgment of God thereon, to be righteous!

If, then, nothing can prevent a man from acknowledging, that the first origin of his ruin was from Adam; and if each man finds the *proximate* cause of his ruin in himself; what can prevent our faith from acknowledging afar off, with all sobriety, and adoring, with all humility, that *remote* secret counsel of God, by which the fall of man was thus pre-ordained? And what should prevent the same faith from beholding, at the same time, the *proximate* cause within?—that the whole human race is individually bound by the guilt and desert of eternal death, as derived from the person of Adam? and that all are in themselves, therefore, subject to death? and to death eternal? Pighius, therefore, has not sundered, shaken, or altered, (as he thought he had done) that pre-eminent and most beautiful symmetry, with which these *proximate* and *remote* causes divinely harmonise!

Now our readers must bear in mind, that both of the following propositions are equally condemned by Pighius. He denies, either that God, from the beginning, before man had yet fallen, decreed what should take place after his fall; or, (in other words) that He chooses, out of the fallen mass, those whom He willed so to choose. He laughs at Augustine, and all like him; that is, at all the godly; who imagine (as he terms it) that, after God *foreknew* the universal ruin of the human race, in the person of Adam, He ordained some to eternal life, and others to eternal destruction. For since he takes it as an acknowledged fact, that the counsel of God concerning the creation of all men to salvation, was *antecedent* to the fall of Adam; he maintains, without a doubt, that *that* purpose of God still remains fixed and unaltered. Otherwise (argues he) God would not be consistent with himself: and his immutable purpose would be subverted by the sin

of man. He severely attacks that appearance of direct contradiction (as they term it) in our doctrine. He maintains, that since God (as we teach), decreed, before Adam was created, what should happen to himself and to his posterity; the destruction of the reprobate ought not to be imputed to sin, now, after the fall, committed: because, he says, it would be absurd to make the effect *antecedent* to its cause. Now I maintain, that both these propositions, which Pighius combats, are true. And, as to his holding before our eyes a pretended disagreement between the two sentiments; there is no such discordance at all.

What we maintain is this;—that man was so created, and placed in such a condition, that he could have no cause whatever of complaint against his Maker. God foresaw the fall of Adam, and most certainly his suffering him to fall was not contrary to, but according to, his Divine will! What room is there for quibbling or shuffling here? And what does such quibbling profit or effect? Yet Pighius denies the truth of this position: *because* (he argues) the *before* conceived counsel of God, concerning the salvation of *all* men, still stands unaltered. As if no solution of his pretended difficulty could be found. The truth of the matter is, that salvation was not offered to all men, on any other ground, than on the condition of their remaining in their original innocence. For, that the decree of God concerning the salvation of all men was decisive and absolute, no one of a sound mind will hold or concede. For when man was placed in a way of salvation, his having willingly fallen therefrom, was a sufficient ground for his just condemnation. But it could not be otherwise. Adam could not but fall; according to the foreknowledge, and will of God. What then!—is Adam, on that account, freed from fault? Certainly not. He fell by his own full free will; and by his own willing act.

Now if Augustine had said, that it was once (or, on one occasion) purposed of God to save all men, the wily

argument of Pighius might have some weight in refutation of such an opinion. But when he declares his mind to be, that Adam was so constituted, at his first creation, that his *proximate*, or his own, rejection of life, was well known to God; nay, that his rejection of it was as it were already included in the secret counsel of God; Augustine truly and justly concludes, from such grounds, that the reprobate are so involved and bound up in the universal *original* guilt, that being left thus, in death, they righteously suffer that judgment of God. The same I also hold. And I maintain, that, as all men are lost in Adam, those who perish, perish by the just judgment of God: and yet, I at the same time witness, as my solemn confession, that whatever happened to, or befel, Adam, was so ordained of God.

And now, as I proceed, it will be my object, not so much to consider, what Pighius says, nor in what order he says it, as to take care, that this worthless fellow be prostrated, and buried under the ruins of his own desperate impudence. And my great concern shall be, to satisfy godly consciences: which we very frequently find to be disturbed by such fellows, by reason of their simplicity and inexperience. To accomplish these ends, I will select, out of the flowing stream of our opponent's interminable loquacity, those parts of it which appear to be the most taking and prominent, or the most specious and plausible: that all may witness, how much such a fellow can "say, without saying anything!" One reason (he says) why he cannot believe in particular and special election, is because Christ, the Redeemer of the whole world, commanded the Gospel to be preached to all men, promiscuously, generally, and without distinction.—But the Gospel is an embassy of peace; by which the world is reconciled to God; as Paul teaches. And, according to the same holy witness, it is preached, that those who hear it might be saved. To this pretended difficulty of Pighius, therefore, I would briefly reply, that Christ was *so* ordained the Saviour of

the whole world, as that He might save those that were given unto Him by the Father, out of the whole world; that He might be the eternal life of them, of whom He is the Head;—that He might receive into a participation of all the "blessings in Him," all those whom God adopted to Himself, by his own unmerited good pleasure, to be his heirs. Now which one of these solemn things can our opponent deny?

Hence, the apostle Paul declares this prophecy of Isaiah to be fulfilled in Christ, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me," &c. Accordingly, Christ himself declares aloud, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) And again, "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." (John xvii. 12.) Hence we read, everywhere, that Christ diffuses life into none but the members of his own body. And he that will not confess, that it is a special gift, and a special mercy to be engrafted into the body of Christ, has never read, with spiritual attention, Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. Hereupon, follows also a third important fact: that the virtue and benefits of Christ are extended unto, and belong to, none, but the children of God. Now, that the universality of the grace of Christ cannot be better judged of, than from the nature of the preaching of the Gospel, there is no one who will not immediately grant. Yet, on this hinge, the whole question turns. If we see and acknowledge, therefore, the principle on which the doctrine of the Gospel offers salvation to all, the whole sacred matter is settled, at once. That the Gospel is, in its nature, able to save all, I by no means deny. But the great question lies here;—did the Lord, by his eternal counsel, *ordain* salvation for *all men!* It is quite manifest that all men, without difference or distinction, are *outwardly called* or invited to repentance and faith. It is equally evident that the same Mediator is set forth before all, as He

who alone can reconcile them to the Father. But it is as fully well known, that none of these things can be understood or perceived but by faith: in fulfilment of the apostle Paul's declaration that "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth:" then, what can it be to others but the "savour of death unto death?" as the same apostle elsewhere powerfully expresses himself.

And farther,—as it is undeniably manifest, that, out of the multitudes whom God calls by his outward voice, in the Gospel, very few believe; if I prove that the greater part of these multitudes remain unbelieving (for God deems none worthy his illumination but whom He will!) I obtain thereby the next conclusion;—that the mercy of God is offered equally to those who believe, and to those who believe not; so that those who are not divinely taught within, are only rendered inexcusable,—not saved! Some make a distinction here;—holding, that the Gospel is saving to all, as it regards its *power to save;* but not in its *effect of saving.* But they by no means untie the knot by this half-way argument. We are still rolled back to the same great question-point;—whether the same *power to believe* is conferred upon all men! Now Paul assigns the *reason why* all do not obey the Gospel. He refers us to the prophet Isaiah. "Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Rom. x. 16.) The prophet here, astonished at the fewness of those who believe, seems to cry aloud 'That it was a thing of the highest shame and reproach, that, while the Word of God was sounding in the ears of all men, there were scarcely any hearts inwardly touched by it!' But that so awful a depravity in man might not terrify the contemplators of it, the apostle Paul afterwards intimates, that it is not given to *all* thus to believe, but to those only to whom God *manifests himself.* (Verse 20.) In a word, the apostle, in this chapter, intimates that any effort or sound of the human voice will be

ineffectual, unless the secret power of God work in the hearts of the hearers. Of this fact Luke places before our eyes a memorable proof: who, after he had recorded the sermon preached by Paul (Acts xiii. 48) says, "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Now, why was not this same doctrine of Paul received with the same mind and heart by all who heard it? Luke assigns the reason, and defines the number of the receivers.—"*As many* as were *ordained to eternal life* believed." The rest did not believe *because* they were *not* "ordained to eternal life." And who is the giver of this disposition of heart, but God alone?

As to those who absurdly argue, that these characters were ordained to believe by the natural impulse of their own hearts; such silly persons are no more worthy of refutation, than those would be, who should affirm, that the world was made by itself. The secret of the whole lies in the hidden wisdom of the Gospel: which is deeper than can be penetrated by any acuteness of human intellect. "The natural man (saith the apostle) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Is it because he will not? that indeed is quite true. For all are rebellious against God, who are not subdued and humbled by his Spirit. But the apostle carries the matter much deeper and higher than this; both as to man, and as to God; showing, that there is that "foolishness" and "ignorance" in *man*, that he *cannot* understand the things of the Spirit; and that the wisdom and counsel of GOD decreed the whole. For (saith the apostle) "who hath known the mind of the Lord, and who hath been his counsellor?" No one (argues he) can know the secrets of God, but by his Spirit only. Whence, he fully concludes, that those alone are the scholars of God, who are gifted, not with the spirit of this world, but with his own heavenly Spirit, "that they may know the things that are freely given them of God." (1 Cor. ii. 12.)

Now, what does the apostle mean by drawing this

comparison between "the spirit of the world" and "the Spirit which is of God," but this?—that men while unregenerate, can only be wise in their own way; and can only cleave unto the earth? but that God, as a heavenly Father, illuminates his own children in an especial manner? And yet, Pighius would here thrust upon us the absurd notion, that where it pleases God, each one may prepare himself, by his own voluntary will and endeavour. As if Paul were not speaking to the Corinthians! whom he shortly afterwards describes as having been thieves, drunkards, slanderers, dissolute, and laden with every monstrous iniquity, until they were cleansed by the sanctification of the Spirit. Now what could there be in these characters, whom God had dragged out of hell itself,—what could there be in these awful sinners, I say, that could help them to meet God half-way, as it were, or to deserve the illumination of his Spirit? But why should I employ a wide circle of words? The Spirit of God, who reveals to us the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" is the Spirit of adoption: and divine adoption is wholly gratuitous: the free gift of God. Therefore, the Spirit himself is *freely given*, on whomsoever He is bestowed. Now, that the Spirit is not thus freely bestowed on all men, universal experience undeniably proves. Wherefore, faith is the special gift of God. And by that gift election is manifested to, and ratified in, the soul that receives it.

This is what Paul means, when he says, that Christ, who is a "stumbling-block to the Jews" and "foolishness to the Greeks," is, "*to them that are called*, the wisdom of God and the power of God." But the next question is, where does *calling* come from? Whence? but from God? who calleth "according to his purpose" those whom He hath chosen? From this state of things flows the conclusion (and this we hold fast;)—that the Gospel, which is, in its essential nature, "a savour of life unto life," and ought to be so to all that hear it; becomes "a

savour of death unto death, in them that perish:" who thus remain in their darkness and unbelief, *because* "the arm of the Lord" is not revealed to them. If then, amidst so universal a corruption and depravity of our nature, some few *do* believe the Gospel,—to ascribe the faith of such to their own goodness, would be perfectly impious. No! Let thanks, on the contrary, be given to God continually (according to the admonition of the apostle) "*because* he hath, from the beginning, *chosen* such believers unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:" in which words, the apostle traces faith and sanctification to the eternal election of God, as its *source* and *cause*. What shall we say then?—were these *chosen, because* they had sanctified *themselves*, and rendered themselves meet or worthy to be chosen?—The apostle asserts most expressly, that this sanctification was the work of the Spirit of God. And as the nature of faith is the same, and equally the gift of God, and the work of his Spirit; it incontrovertibly follows, that those who are illuminated unto faith, *are* thus illuminated and gifted with faith, *that* their election of God may be *manifested* and ratified by these its very effects. And most certainly, when we hear that no one cometh unto Christ but he that is drawn by the Father; we may safely adopt the language and argument of Augustine, "Who can be said to be drawn, who is *already willing* to go? And yet, no one comes to Christ but he who is willing. Wherefore, every comer to Christ is *drawn* in a wonderful way, *that he may be willing*, by him who knows how to work inwardly on the very hearts of men; and so to work in them, not that they may believe against their wills (which would be impossible), but that *they* may be *made* willing to believe *who* were before unwilling to believe."

All this Pighius loudly denies; adducing that passage of the apostle (1 Tim. ii. 4), "Who will have all men to be saved;" and referring also to Ezekiel xviii. 23, he argues

thus,—"That God willeth not the death of a sinner," may be taken upon his own oath; where he says by that prophet, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the wicked that dieth; but rather that he should return from his ways and live."—Now we reply, that as the language of the prophet, here, is an exhortation to repentance, it is not at all marvellous in him to declare, that God willeth all men to be saved. For the mutual relation between threats and promises shows, that such forms of speaking are *conditional*. In this same manner, God declared to the Ninevites, and to the kings of Gerar and Egypt, that He would do that, which, in reality, He did not intend to do: for their repentance averted the punishment which He had threatened to inflict upon them. Whence it is evident, that the punishment was denounced, on condition of their remaining obstinate and impenitent. And yet, the denunciation of the punishment was positive; as if it had been an irrevocable decree. But after God had terrified them with the apprehension of his wrath, and had duly humbled them as not being utterly desperate, He encourages them with the hope of pardon; that they might feel that there was yet left open, a space for remedy. Just so it is with respect to the *conditional promises* of God, which invite all men to salvation. They do not positively prove that, which God has decreed in his secret counsel, but *declare only* what God is *ready to do*, to all those who are brought to faith and repentance.

But men untaught of God, not understanding these things, allege, that we hereby attribute to God a twofold or double will. Whereas, God is so far from being variable, that no shadow of such variableness appertains to Him, even in the most remote degree. Hence Pighius, ignorant of the divine nature of these deep things, thus argues;—"What else is this, but making God a mocker of men; if God is represented as really not willing that, which He professes to will; and as not having pleasure in that, in which He in reality has pleasure." But if these two

members of the sentence be read, *in conjunction*, as they ever ought to be, ("*I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked*," and, "*but that the wicked turn from his way and live;*")—read these two propositions, *in connexion* with each other; and the calumny is washed off at once. God requires of us this conversion, or "turning away from our iniquity:" and, in whomsoever He finds it, He disappoints not such an one of the promised reward of eternal life. Wherefore, God is as much said to have pleasure in, and to will, this eternal life, as to have pleasure in the repentance: and He has pleasure in the latter; because He invites all men to it by his Word. Now all this is in perfect harmony with his secret and eternal counsel; by which He decreed to convert none but his own elect. None but God's elect, therefore, *ever do* turn from their wickedness. And yet, the adorable God is not, on these accounts, to be considered variable or capable of change: because, as a Law-giver, He enlightens all men with the external doctrine of *conditional* life. In this primary manner He calls, or invites, *all men* unto eternal life. But, in the latter case, He brings unto eternal life, those whom He willed, according to his eternal purpose: *regenerating* by his Spirit, as an eternal Father, *his own children* only.

It is quite certain, that men do not "turn from their evil ways" to the Lord, of their own accord, nor by any instinct of nature. Equally certain is it, that the gift of conversion is not common to all men. Because, this is that one of the two covenants, which God promises that He will not make with any, but with his own children and his own elect people: concerning whom, He has recorded his promise, that "He will *write* his law *in their hearts!*" (Jer. xxxi. 33.) Now, a man must be utterly beside himself to assert, that this promise is made to all men generally and indiscriminately. God says expressly by Paul, who refers to the Prophet Jeremiah, "For this is the covenant that I will make *with them*. Not accord-

ing to the covenant that I made with their fathers: but I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." (Heb. viii. 9, 10.) Surely, to apply this promise to those who were worthy of this new covenant, or to such as had prepared *themselves*, by their *own* merits or endeavours, to receive it; must be worse than the grossest ignorance and folly: and the more so, as the Lord is speaking by the prophet, to those who had, before, "stony hearts." All this is plainly stated also, and fully explained, by the Prophet Ezekiel (chap. xxxvi. ver. 26).

That *obstinacy* and *enmity* are common to all men, I fully admit; and I also maintain, that the heart of no man is softened, and made flexible and obedient to the will of God, until God gives him the will and power to do what He commands. For why are we called "new creatures?" but because "we are his workmanship; created unto good works?"—But, I pray you, what kind of a division, and how iniquitous a division, of all praise and glory, would it be, to make God the Creator of us mortal men; and yet to make each one of us his *own creator* unto righteousness and eternal life! In this way, God would only have for himself the praise of ineffectual and failing grace. That portion of the glory which is the far more excellent, would fall to *our* lot. But the Scripture positively affirms, that to circumcise the hearts of men, is the work of God alone: nor is regeneration ascribed to any other than God himself. Hence it is, that whatever in man is created anew, in the image of God, is called "spirit." "That which is born of the flesh *is flesh*; and that which is born of the Spirit, *is spirit*." (John iii. 6.) God does, indeed, frequently invite us to repentance: but He himself is everywhere declared to be the author of conversion: his "law" is said "to convert souls." The intermediate agency of this conversion however is frequently transferred to the ministers of the Word. But as, while they labour by praying, by sowing, by watering, it is God alone that

"giveth the increase;" it is not at all to be wondered at, that it should be declared to be his work alone, to open the heart of *his own* to "attend to the things spoken" by his ministers.

Hence it is that Augustine, after having treated of the elect, and having shown that their salvation is safely secured, under the faithful custody of God, so that no one of them can perish, makes these solemn and blessed observations; "All the rest of mankind, who are not of *this number* (says he), but are of the same fallen mass, being ordained vessels of wrath, are born for the use and service of these elect ones. For God created no one, even of them, at random, or by chance, or for nought. Nor does He work, ignorantly, whatever of good He works in, or by, them. For his creating in them a human nature, is itself a good thing. And his adorning, by them, the order of this present life, is a good thing. But God brings no one of these to spiritual repentance, and to reconciliation with himself! Although therefore these are born out of the same lump of perdition as the elect of God; yet by their hardness and impenitency of heart, they all, as far as in them lies, 'treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath.' While, out of this same fallen mass, God calls some to repentance by his goodness and mercy; leaving these, the rest, in just judgment, to their own destruction."—Thus, Augustine.

But that no one might imagine, that there is here any discrepancy, variance, or conflict, between divine grace and our industry; these sentiments of the holy father everywhere meet us, in his works.—"Men toil (says he) to find, in our own free-will, what good thing there is that is our own: and which we have not received from God. I, for my part, know not what good things of the kind can be discovered in us, at all." In another place, arguing on the same deep subject, he draws this conclusion. —"Wherefore, unless we hold fast these two positions; —not only that that power of will, which is free to turn

this way and that, and which is one of those *natural* good things which a bad man may badly use, is the gift of God; but that *that good will* which is one of those *spiritual* good things of which there cannot be made a bad use, is of God also; unless, I say, we hold fast these two propositions; I know not on what grounds we are to defend the sacred position of the apostle, involved in his memorable question; 'What hast thou that thou didst not receive?' But if there be in us a certain kind of *free* will, received from God, which may yet be either good or evil; and if there be in us also a *good* will, rendered so by ourselves; that which proceeds from ourselves, is better than that which we receive from God."—Augustine arrives at this final inference, from the above premises;—"Where God (says he) is pleased to give this will, to obey Him and to come unto Christ, it is an act of his *free mercy;* not *according to the merits* of those on whom He bestows the gift, and to whom He shows the mercy. Where God is *not willing* to bestow the gift, nor to show the mercy, it is a display of his *truth:* which declares, that none can come to Christ to whom the *will* to come is not given. And though He has the *power* to *draw* them, He draws them not; but they are left to perish; and thus to manifest the *truth* of his Word;—that 'no one can come unto Christ, except the Father draw him.'"

The difficulty which, according to Pighius, lies in that other place of Paul, where the apostle affirms, that "God will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. ii. 4), is solved in one moment; and by one question; namely, *How* does God wish all men to come to the knowledge of the truth? For Paul couples this *salvation,* and this *coming to the knowledge of the truth,* together. Now I would ask, did the same will of God stand the same, from the beginning of the world, or not? For if God willed, or wished, that his truth should be known unto *all men,* how was it that

He did not proclaim and make known his law to the *Gentiles* also? Why did He confine the light of life within the narrow limits of *Judæa?* And what does Moses mean, when he says, "For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" (Deut. iv. 7, 8.) The Divine lawgiver surely here means, that there was no other nation which had statutes and laws, by which it was ruled, like unto that nation. And what does Moses here, but extol the peculiar privilege of the race of Abraham? To this responds the high encomium of David, pronounced on the same nation, "He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them." (Ps. cxlvii. 20.) Nor must we disregard the express *reason* assigned by the Psalmist, "*Because* the Lord loved thy fathers, *therefore* he chose their seed after them." (Deut. iv. 37.) And why did God thus choose them? Not because they were, in themselves, more excellent than others; but because *it pleased* God to choose them "for his peculiar people." What?—Are we to suppose that the apostle did not know, that he himself was prohibited by the Holy Spirit from "preaching the word" in Asia, and from passing over into Bithynia? But as the continuance of this argument would render us too prolix, we will be content with taking one position more;—that God, after having thus lighted the candle of eternal life to the *Jews alone*, suffered the *Gentiles* to wander, for many ages, in the darkness of ignorance; and that, at length, this special gift and blessing were promised to the Church, "*But* the Lord shall arise upon *thee;* and his glory shall be seen upon thee." (Is. lx. 2.)—*Now* let Pighius boast, if he can, that God willeth *all men* to be saved! The above arguments, founded on the Scriptures, prove, that

not even the external preaching of the doctrine of salvation, which is very far inferior to the illumination of the Spirit, was not made of God common to *all men.*

This passage of the apostle (1 Tim. ii. 4) was long ago brought forward by the Pelagians, and handled against us, with all their might. What Augustine advanced, in reply to them, in many parts of his works, I think it unnecessary to bring forward, on the present occasion. I will only adduce one passage; which clearly and briefly proves, how unconcernedly he despised their objection now in question. "When our Lord complains (says he) that though He wished to gather together the children of Jerusalem as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but she would not: are we to consider that the will of God was overpowered by a number of weak men: so that He, who was the Almighty God, could not do what He wished or willed to do? If so, what is to become of that omnipotence, by which He did 'whatsoever pleased him in heaven and in earth?' Moreover, who will be found so profanely mad, as to say, that God cannot convert the evil wills of men, *which* He pleases, *when* He pleases, and *as* He pleases, to good? Now, when He does this, He does it *in mercy:* and when He doeth it not, *in judgment* He doeth it not."

The knot immediately before us, however, is not yet, I confess, untied. I have nevertheless extorted from Pighius thus much;—that no one but a man deprived of his common sense and common judgment, can believe, that salvation was ordained, by the secret counsel of God, equally and indiscriminately, for *all men.*—The true meaning of Paul, however, in the passage now under consideration, is perfectly clear and intelligible to every one, who is not determined on contention. The apostle is exhorting that all solemn "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings and for all that are in authority." And because there were, in that age, so many and such wrathful and bitter enemies of

the Church; Paul, to prevent despair from hindering the prayers of the faithful, hastens to meet their distresses, by earnestly entreating them, to be instant in prayer "for all men," and especially "for all those in authority." "*For* (saith the apostle) God will have *all men* to be saved."—Who does not see, that the apostle is here speaking of *orders of men*, rather than of individuals? Indeed, that distinction which commentators here make, is not without great reason and point;—that *nations* of individuals, not *individuals* of nations, are here intended by Paul. At any rate, that no other "will" of God is here to be understood, than that which is revealed by the external preaching of the Gospel, is undeniably evident from the context. The plain meaning of the apostle therefore is, that God 'willeth' the salvation of all men considered generally; whom he therefore mercifully calls, or invites, unto Christ, by the open preaching of the Word.

But Pighius renews the battle with me, on the field of "*respect of persons.*" And because it is written, that there is "no respect of persons with God;" he at once concludes therefrom, that *all men* are equally loved of God. I *did*, indeed, answer him; arguing, that by the term "persons," in the Scripture, is signified, all those external circumstances attached to men; which external circumstances involve not the great *cause* of all; but which procure favour to some men, and load others with hatred and contempt. Pighius, however, thunders out that this explanation of the term is absurd beyond all expression or conception. But if the matter were put to the vote, I am quite satisfied that I should have many men of the highest estimation in the Church, both as companions and as leaders, in my interpretation of the term in question. Let one ground on which my explanation rests, suffice, for the present occasion.—There is, in the Hebrew language, the noun PANIM; which is of the same signification as the plural Latin noun *Facies;* which signifies 'faces,' or 'appearances.' The Hebrew noun PANIM is used when judges

are forbidden to "accept *persons* in judgment." The same term is used, when Moses testifies, that "the Lord regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward." (Deut. i. 17, and x. 17.) This same noun is also frequently used in the history of Job. Now I would ask,—What else can be understood by this term, than all kinds of external appearances (as we generally term them) by which we are often drawn aside from the reality, with which they stand connected? In the same manner, the apostles, when speaking of servants and masters, Jews and Gentiles, nobles and obscure, high and low, use the Greek term *πρόσωπον*, to denote that external *appearance* of excellency, which some have above others, and which often prevents what is just and right in, or towards, such persons, from being clearly seen. Hence it is also, that Christ opposes the judging according to *ὄψιν* (that is, 'aspect') to *just judgment*. As if he had said, Wherever the favour or hatred of men rules, it cannot be, but that such prejudice must pervert all equity and righteousness.

Every one, therefore, will immediately see, that Pighius, carried away by the maddened insolence of hatred against the truth; cared not what he said.—But now let us listen to this admonitor's correction of our interpretation. He pronounces "respect of persons" to be a vice that has place in the administration of justice. Whence he concludes, that God is no respecter of persons, *because* He is impartial to all men; and *because*, as is becoming in a dispenser of the public justice, and of the public good, He shews himself, as a matter of course, impartially liberal and beneficent. Thus prates Pighius; putting an extinguisher upon the light of the Scripture; and babbling just what first comes into his own truthless head. For the whole Scripture confirms my interpretation and view: nor does my opponent produce one passage to prove *his* absurd figment. And what wonder; when he can bring forth his mad dreams with so much confidence and security; when he has not even weighed the meaning of the very

term itself, upon which he is uttering so much vain talk. And I suppose his thus pouring out words, in contempt of all grammar and sense, is to shew himself off as a great theologian! With him 'person' (*persona*) signifies nothing more or less than 'man.' Whereas it is all the while more than evident, that by 'person' is signified an *external quality;* assuming which, or clothed with which, men are considered worthy of favour and respect, or justly subjected to contempt. But whether God be an equal and impartial dispenser or not, the testimony of Christ, we think, is much more worthy of credit than that of Pighius.—Our Lord then introduces the blessed God, under the person, or character, of the master of a household, speaking thus, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?" According to which reasoning of our Lord, Paul, that he might set forth the adorable God, bound and responsible to no one, nor hindered by any person or thing from dispensing his grace, "according to *his own will,*" closes his argument with this interrogation; "Or, who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?"

Now in the first place, if there had been one grain of the fear of God in this man, Pighius, could he ever have dared thus insolently to call God to order! For he absolutely prescribes it as a rule to the Most High, that He ought to extend his bounty to all equally, as from a public treasury. Thus leaving nothing to God by which to exercise his free beneficence.—God judges of every individual (Pighius says), according to the dignity, merit, and works, of each individual; and not according to his own good-pleasure. For what merit, in them, then, did God choose the family of Abraham? What dignity did He find in that race, which moved Him to prefer them to all the rest of the world? God himself assigns no other reason than *because* "He loved their fathers." This He declares more expressly elsewhere. "Behold, the heaven

and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and chose their seed after them, even you, above all people." (Deut. x. 14, 15.) In another place, God reduces all their merits to nothing, by declaring Abraham and all his family to have been idolaters. "And Joshua said unto the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed and gave him Isaac." (Josh. xxiv. 2, 3.) From the above passages, at any rate, I obtain that which Pighius denies:—that the sovereign pleasure of God was clearly preached by Moses. But our opponent denies that it depends on the sovereign decree of God, that one is chosen and another left: asserting, that it depends on the affections of men. What then meaneth this, "That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him that calleth; It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." (Rom. ix. 11, 12.) But the blasphemy which Pighius afterwards vomits out is execrable. "God (he asserts) is made not only unjust but cruel if he be represented as ordaining any human being whatever to destruction."—Pighius however will one day stand before the tribunal of that God of whom Paul declares, "that he will manifest his power upon the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction!" Nay our opponent even now feels, under the sense of the eternal destruction which awaits him,—that God is not a being fabricated out of the opinions or thoughts of men; but that He was, is, and will be, the eternal Judge of the whole world. This miserable mortal (I say) is even now experiencing how true that word is, "That God overcometh when He is judged." (Ps. li. 4.)

I am willing to confess, however, that a godly and

upright life is sometimes contrasted with 'person' (*persona*); as when Peter says, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of *persons:* (προσωπολήπτης.) But in every nation he that *feareth Him,* and *worketh righteousness,* is *accepted with Him.*" (Acts x. 34, 35.) But the answer to those who would bring this Scripture against us, is, that what gifts soever God bestows on his own children, He approves and delights in; while in the whole moral nature of man, He finds nothing but what deserves his righteous hatred. Wherefore, in order that God may have worshippers, whom He may love, He must, while they are yet devoid of all good, first bestow upon them, in the midst of their unworthiness of it, his free love; and thus freely give them that, which he may afterwards love himself. "But this *first* (or *preventing*) grace, He bestows on whom He will, (saith Augustine;) because He is *merciful:* which grace, if He does not give, He is *just.* And where He giveth it not, it is because He *willeth* not to give it; 'that He might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy.' And when Peter says, that God is 'no respecter of persons' he shows, at the close of the chapter, what he means by it; namely that God, sometimes, passing by the children of those who do worship Him, delivers from destruction the children of the reprobate."—And what Augustine farther says on this mighty subject, is well worthy of being borne in memory. "No more glorious glass, in which to behold predestination exists (says he), than the blessed Mediator himself: who, according to his *human* nature, considered *as such,* attained to the honour of becoming the 'only begotten Son of God,' by no merit of his own!" But this good-pleasure of God, which God himself sets before us for our admiration in Christ, the Head of the Church, Pighius will not admit or suffer, even in the individual members of his body. Nay, he contends, that the blessed mother of Christ was chosen on account of her own merit; as is proved (he says) from her own song, "Who hath regarded

the lowliness of his handmaiden."—Such are Pighius' PROOFS, that the election of God is founded on the merits of men! and that it is not sovereign and free; *because* He chose, in the case of Mary, that which was mean and contemptible!

On this same Divine principle is dissipated, also, another objection adduced by Pighius.—"When Christ (he says) calls the blessed of his Father to inherit the kingdom, He does not state their *being elected* to be *the cause* of their right to that inheritance; but *because* they had *done works* of charity." (Matt. xxv. 34, 35, 36.)—Now I would by no means hurry away men to the secret election of God, that they may, with open mouth, expect salvation from thence: but I would exhort them to flee directly to Christ: in whom salvation is set forth before our eyes: which salvation, had it not been revealed in Christ, would have for ever *remained* "hidden in God." For whosoever walketh not in the plain way of faith; to him the election of God can be nothing but a labyrinth of destruction. Wherefore, if we would enjoy the certain remission of our sins; if our consciences would rest in a sure confidence of eternal life; if we would call upon God, as our heavenly Father, without fear; we must by no means make our *beginning* with the investigation of what God decreed concerning us, before the world began. Our contemplation must be, what God, of his fatherly love, *has revealed* to us, in Christ; and what Christ himself *daily preaches* to us, through his everlasting Gospel. Our deepest search and highest aim must be, to become the sons of God; and to know that we are such. But the *mirror* of free adoption, in which alone we can behold so high and unspeakable a blessing, is Christ, the Son; who came down to us from the Father, for the very end that, by engrafting us into his body, He might make us heirs of the kingdom of heaven; of which kingdom He is himself the earnest and the pledge. And as, moreover, this inheritance was once obtained for us by the blood of

Christ, and remains consigned to us, on the sacred pages of the everlasting Gospel; so the knowledge and possession of it can be attained in no other way than by faith.

In a word, I not only now freely confess, but everywhere inculcate, in all my writings, both that the salvation of men is inseparately connected with their faith, and that Christ is the only door by which any man can enter the kingdom of heaven; and also, that tranquil peace can be found nowhere but in the Gospel. I have moreover ever taught, that whosoever shall turn aside, even the shortest step, from the Gospel of Christ, and from faith therein, can do nothing but lose himself in doubts, ambiguities, and perplexities: and that the more confidently any one attempts to break in upon, and penetrate, those profound mysteries of God's secret counsel, without the Gospel and faith therein, will ever, in so doing, get so much the farther and farther from God. Wherefore, that the children of God, notwithstanding their election of God before all worlds, are to walk by faith, I deny not, but constantly affirm.

Hence, on these principles, another argument set against us by our opponent, is done away with; when he alleges, "that God will crown, at the last day, those gifts of his Spirit, which He may have bestowed on his elect in this present life." But this does not alter the truth and fact, that God engrafts, by faith and by the sanctification of his Spirit, those whom He hath chosen in Christ, into his body. Nor does it alter the truth, that He calls and justifies, in his own time, those whom He predestinated to these blessings, before the foundation of the world. Wherefore, Paul connects both these works of God most beautifully; where he says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God," to which he immediately adds, "to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. viii. 28.) This, then, is the way in which God governs *his own*. This is the manner in which he completes the work of his grace

in them. But why He thus takes them by the hand at all, there is another, and far higher, *cause*, namely, his *eternal purpose*, by which He ordained them unto eternal life. Wherefore, the impudence of Pighius is the more ridiculous. For he hesitates not to grasp, most insolently, for his own purpose, a testimony of the Scripture, which thus stands directly against him. For in the first place, he would absurdly remind us, that it is not said that all things "work together for good" to the *elect* or the *beloved*. But he asserts, that a different *cause* is assigned; namely, that it was because *they* loved *God*. Whereas, the apostle purposely adds the correction of all possible error upon the point, by subjoining "who are the called according to his purpose;" that no one might attribute "the working of all things for his good," to his own merit.

In fact, the mind of the apostle, in this passage, is first to show how the faithful, for whom God causes "all things to work together for good," ought to be affected towards Him;—that they ought to "love God." And love to God is, indeed, a peculiar first-fruit of being "called" of God. But that those who are thus "called" might not cleave to themselves, and their own merits, Paul moreover teaches them, that the real source of their salvation, and of "all things working together for their good," is seated much higher than themselves; in heaven itself, and in the eternal purpose of God; *even because* they were first chosen of God; and were therefore "the called, according to his purpose." This knot also Pighius thinks he can loosen and settle by a single sentence; which is positively a solemn joke. He says, that God 'calls' *all men* to *holiness*. Whereas, the apostle most plainly sets forth '*calling*' as being effectual only by the absolute '*purpose*' of God—"Who are the *called* (saith the apostle) according to his *purpose*." Over these truths, so prominently and striking plain, Pighius would spread a darkness so thick, that their transparent clearness should

scarcely be seen. What, for instance, can be more perspicuously clear than this passage of the Scripture? "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. viii. 30.) Now, to what extent soever our opponent may mangle and lacerate this sentence of the Apostle Paul, he can never so stretch it out, as to make it reach to all mankind. Hence is evident the extreme folly of the arguments of all those, who labour to subvert the election of God by substituting for it faith and good works. This is making, or attempting to make, "the daughter swallow up the mother" (as the old proverb hath it).

The last subterfuge of Pighius, in reference to the Scripture before us, is this;—that God predestinated none unto salvation, but they were those whom He foreknew. But this way of escape, I have already blocked up against these opponents: where I have shown, that God could have foreseen nothing in man, but what was worthy eternal destruction; until He himself should have created him anew by his Spirit. If then no one man has anything good which he hath not received from God; what can one man bring into God's sight more than another, in which he can excel his fellow man? God therefore foreknew *his own;* not as foreseeing their merits, for they had none; but because He cast upon them an eye of mercy and favour: thus distinguishing them from others, and numbering them among his children, notwithstanding all their sin and unworthiness: according to that word of Paul, "Who maketh thee to differ?" But Pighius' free foreknowledge, which he calls naked (that is, naked of all preference in the mind of God), is no foreknowledge at all. With what feathers of merit or acceptableness, then, will Pighius adorn *his* foreseen and predestined man, so as to prevent him from coming before God naked, and deformed in every part? For the Scripture declares aloud, that whatever there is

in fallen and corrupt man, by nature, is hateful in the sight of God. And it pronounces, with a voice equally loud, that nothing is acceptable to God, but his own image in those who are created anew in Christ.

Pighius next proceeds thus.—When we are anxiously inquiring the reason why the wicked are eternally condemned, the Scripture does not cast in our teeth such tyrannical sentences as these, in reply,—because they were distinguished from the elect by the eternal counsel of God,—because it pleased God to ordain them to eternal destruction.—We do not, I say, find in the Scripture such shocking and hard answers to our inquiries as these. These are merely the reasons assigned by men, in order to make such sentences as these appear to be true;—I will it so; I command it to be so; my will is an all-sufficient reason.—No! The reasons which we hear from the mouth of Christ himself are these;—"I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink," &c., &c.—Similar to this argument is that also which Pighius advances in another place. Christ (says he) will not, in the last day, say to the wicked, that they were eternally condemned, "*because* they were born of the corrupt seed of Adam, *because* they inherited the desert of eternal death from his sin; and *because* it was just and righteous that they should perish for his fault." No, says Pighius, the reasons that Christ himself will assign before assembled worlds in that day will be these;—because they did not give bread to the hungry; because they did not clothe the naked; nor perform other kindred works of charity.

But, if original sin and guilt are not, in the estimation of Pighius, sufficient to condemn men eternally; and if the secret judgment of God can have no place with him; what will he make of the case of infant children who are taken out of this life before they could possibly have performed any of the works of charity above alluded to?—Now there was the same natural condition of birth and of

death, both in those infants who died in Sodom, and in those who died in Jerusalem; and their works, or rather no works, were precisely the same. How is it, then, that Christ will separate, in the last day, the one from the other, placing the one on his right hand and the other on his left? Who does not here adore the glorious judgment of God, who ordained that the one part of these children should be born at Jerusalem, whence, through the knowledge of the truth they might afterwards be translated to a better life, while the others should be born in that wide entrance into hell, Sodom? As therefore I hold, in truth, that Christ will in the last day recompense unto the elect the reward of righteousness; so I by no means speak falsely, when I assert, that the reprobate will, in that day, pay the punishment of their unrighteousness and of all their iniquities. And though I firmly maintain that God, in his eternal counsel, chose those whom He pleased unto life eternal, and left those whom He pleased to eternal destruction; yet there will not be found, in the whole of my doctrine, an assertion, either that there are no punishments ordained for evil works, or, that there is no reward ordained for good works. No! "We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor. v. 10.)—But the great question is, *whence come* that righteousness and holiness which will then be thus crowned? Whence, but from God himself, who begat these rewarded ones unto newness of life, by his own Spirit? And whence is this gift of regeneration but from God's free adoption?

Pighius' argument is just like the reasoning of a man who should maintain, that the day WAS not *originally* made of created light, *because* it IS the shining of the sun that *now* makes the day. This comparison is not, however, I confess, strictly true in all its parts. For the light that was created "in the beginning" has properly God as its author. Whereas our eternal condemnation so wholly rests in ourselves, that

it is not lawful for us to fetch, from afar, any *foreign* or representative colours, which may tend, in any way, to lessen our sight of its mighty reality. My only object, in adopting this comparison, was to shew, in a concise manner, how preposterously Pighius withdraws from our view the great *remote* cause, by setting immediately before our eyes the *proximate* cause, in the consideration of these momentous matters.—He contends, that the wicked will be eternally condemned, because they have brought upon themselves the wrath of God by their *own* evil doings. And on this ground he concludes, that their eternal condemnation does not proceed from *the decree* of God. Whereas I maintain, that they have heaped evil deeds upon evil deeds, throughout their lives; *because*, being essentially depraved by their birth in sin, they could do nothing else *but* sin. Nevertheless they sinned thus, not from any outward impulse or constraint; but knowingly and willingly, from the spontaneous motion of the heart. Nay, that the corruption and depravity of nature are the source and fountain from which all sins of every kind flow, can be denied by no one who would not root out the very rudiments of all godliness. But if you ask me, the *reason* why God corrects sin in his own elect, and does not deem the reprobate worthy the same remedy? I reply,—the *reason* lies *hidden, in himself!*

It is in this way that the apostle Paul reasons, in the 9th chapter of his Epistle to the Romans.—After he had proved God to be the great disposer and ordainer of eternal life and eternal death; and had shewn that those will at length be saved, whom He rescues from eternal destruction; and after He had loudly declared, that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy on whom He will show mercy;" and that "whom He will He hardeneth;"—after these declarations, the apostle brings forth copious, and as it were palpable, *causes* of the blindness of his own nation; namely, *because* the greatest part of them rejected Christ; and *because* they obstinately resisted God, "stretching out

his hands unto them 'as the prophet expresses it) all the day long." Wherefore, these two solemn principles, divinely harmonize with each other;—that every man is, in himself, the *cause* of his own eternal condemnation; and that, nevertheless, all those who are destitute of the Spirit of God, rush blindly against Christ. Agreeably to these Divine principles; Paul, bringing in the Jews guilty, because, "*going* about to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God," and were, on that account, cast out of the Church of Christ; —Paul, I repeat, having thus enforced these Divine principles, yet plainly teaches, that it was entirely *of grace* that the rest stood in the truth and faith, and did not thus fall: according to that remarkable declaration of God himself; "Yet have I left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." (1 Kings xix. 18.) For, as Augustine is careful to remark, "These seven thousand did not stand by their own strength. It was God who reserved them to himself, that they might be a remnant. But Paul still more expressly declares, that the remnant gathered by the coming of Christ, in his day, was a 'remnant saved according to the free election of grace.' Hearest thou the term 'remnant?' By this expression is signified that a small number was separated from the general mass of mankind. And the apostle affirms, that these were saved, not by their own will or strength, but by the free grace and mercy of God. He traces their salvation to God's free election; by which he plainly means, that the *sole cause* of their not perishing with the rest of mankind was, because they were *freely elected* of God. Whence follows the plain conclusion, that if *all men* were elected, *no man* would perish."

Now if a mortal man should pronounce *his* "*I will*" and his "*I command;*" and should say that HIS *will* ought to be deemed a *sufficient reason* for HIS *actions*, I confess that such an "*I will*" would be tyrannical indeed! But

to call God's "*I will*" and God's "*I command*" tyrannical, is profanity, blasphemy, and madness! For no mortal dares impute to God anything unequal or excessive; so as to imply, that there can be, in Him, any inordinate *will*, wish, or desire, as in men. On the contrary, such honour and reverence are ever due to his *will*, that it is worthy of being considered as containing in itself all the validity of *a just reason:* because, the will of God is the source and rule of all righteousness. For as to that distinction commonly held in the schools, concerning the *twofold will* of God; such distinction is by no means admitted by us. The sophists of Sorbon prate about an *ordinate will* of God, and an *absolute will* of God. But this is a blasphemy deservedly abhorred, in its sound to all godly ears; but plausible and pleasant to the ears of Pighius, and of all his fellows. I, however, on the contrary, contend, that so far from there being anything *in*ordinate, in God, whatever there is of order, in heaven or in earth, flows from Him alone, and from his *will*. Whenever therefore we carry the *will* of God to its utmost height; and show that it is *higher than* all reason; far be it from us to imagine, that He ever *wills* anything, but *with* the *highest reason*. We also deeply feel, that He so possesses, as his own right, the sum of all power; that our sacred duty is to be content with the nod of his will alone, in all things. For if that be true which the Psalmist saith, "Thy judgments, O Lord, are a great deep" (Ps. xxxvi. 6); when the mind of a man launches forth into that height of pride, that it cannot rest in the alone good-pleasure and will of God; let him take solemn heed, that *that* "great deep" swallow him not up! Indeed, it must be so: it cannot be otherwise: and such vengeance is gloriously just!

Wherefore, let that noble and solemn appeal of Augustine never fall from our memory.—"Listen to what God is, and what thou art. He, is God! Thou, art man! If thou seem to thyself to be speaking of justice, in the works and ways of God;—is the *fountain* of all justice, thinkest

thou, dried up? Thou, as a man, expectest an answer from me, who also am a man. Therefore, let us both hear the apostle saying, with reference to all questioning of God, —'Nay, but who art thou, O man?' Better is believing ignorance, than daring knowledge! Search for *merit;* and you will find nothing but *punishment!*—'O the depth, &c.!' Peter denies; a robber believes!—'O the depth, &c.!' Askest thou the reason?—I tremble before 'the depth, &c.!' Reason thou;—I will wonder and admire! Dispute thou;—I will believe! I see the *height:* I will not rush into the 'depth!'—Paul quietly rested, because he found reason for wonder and admiration. *He* calls the judgments of God 'unsearchable;' and comest thou on purpose 'to search into them'? Paul says, 'His ways are past finding out;' and comest thou on purpose 'to find them out'?"—Akin to these holy sentiments, is that also where Augustine saith, in another place. "Wilt thou join me in *dispute?* Nay rather join with me in *admiration* and *wonder!*—Rather join me, in exclaiming, 'O the depth, &c!'—Let us agree to tremble, together; that we perish not in presumption, together!"

Pighius displays, in his own estimation, great acuteness, when he argues thus;—"There would be no deep abyss at all, if the *will* of God were to be considered as the *highest of all reason;* because, nothing would be more easy, than to say, that all things were done, *because* God so pleased; where his will ruled absolutely, and alone."—But by babbling thus sophistically, he ridiculously passes over that very point, which forms the great question at issue. It is quite plain that all things are done, *because* it so pleased God. But the great question is,—*Why* did it please God, that one thing should be done in one way, and another thing in a way quite the contrary?—Pighius then proceeds with the same line of silly argumentation. And in order that he might show, that God had *a reason* and *a cause* in all his counsels; he adduces, as a proof, the answer which Christ gave to his disciples in the case of a

blind man,—'that he was born blind, That the works of God, should be made manifest in him.' Thus does Pighius make a shadow battle, and then fight it out; imagining, that he has gained the victory. But when, and where, did the monstrous idea enter *my* mind, that any counsel of God was without God's *reason* for it?—As I constantly make God the RULE of the whole world, who, by his incomprehensible and wonderful counsel, governs and directs all things; will any man say, that he can gather, from my words, that I make God to be carried this way, and that way, at random? or to do, what He does, with blindfold temerity?

Now it is singular, that Pighius quotes some words of mine, by which, if I mistake not, he is himself most evidently refuted. The words to which I allude are those wherein I assert, that God has a *purpose* in all his ways and works, how *hidden* soever they may be: which purpose is, that He may spread the glory of his name. But my opponent would set before the eyes of his readers a colour of *contradiction*, in my sentiments; because I hold, that no *reason* for the good-will of God, in any of his works, is to be *required* or *investigated*; and yet that I at the same time show, what that reason is.—But it is useless to waste time in exposing such cold and self-evident absurdities.—The Lord has as *a reason* for all his works;—his *own great glory*. This is his ultimate object, in them all. Hence, on the testimony of Paul, God raised up Pharaoh, "that He might show his power in him; and that his name might be declared throughout all the earth." (Rom. ix. 17.) Now does the apostle Paul, I pray, contradict himself when he exclaims, immediately afterwards, that the judgments of God are "past finding out?" The same apostle declares also, that the vessels of wrath, "*appointed*" by the Lord "unto destruction," were "*endured*" by Him, "with much long suffering;" in order that "He might show his wrath, and make his power known in them." (Rom. ix. 22.)—Now, is the wondering admiration of

Paul which immediately follows—" O the depth! "—*contrary*, I pray you, to this his sentiment?—Tell me, I repeat,—does the apostle here contradict himself? If he does not, neither do I in my like solemn argument, *contradict myself*!

But Pighius goes farther still into error, absurdity, and confusion, in his way of arguing.—He spreads a false colour over the very term, *cause*, by introducing the *final cause*, in the place of the *formal cause*. For although *the end* to which God looks, in his works, be not obscure; namely, his own great and wide glory! yet, the *reason* WHY it pleaseth Him so to work, by no means appears so wholly, and immediately, plain.—The pith, however, and sum of the present point of the whole great question is this.—Although God does not demonstrate to us, by plain and satisfactory arguments, his own righteousness, in all his works; yet our bounden duty is to be assured, that whatever He doeth, He doeth righteously. It is therefore our duty to rest in his will alone. So that our knowledge of his *will* and *pleasure*, in whatsoever He doeth, though the cause of his doing it should surpass our comprehension, ought to suffice us, more than a thousand reasons.—Hence the folly of Pighius, in quarrelling with me, and accusing me of inconsistency: *because*, while I maintain that no reason for the Divine will, should be inquired into; I yet loudly affirm that God *willeth* nothing, but what He judgeth just and right to be done. For he asserts, that this latter member of my argument *is* really *rendering a reason* for the will of God, as the cause of all: the rendering of which reason (he says) I elsewhere declare to be inconsistent, in myself, or in any one else. But what *knowledge* of *the cause* can I be said to profess, if I only believe, that God does, what He does, with a great design, and what He judges right to be done; and especially, if I profess myself to be, all the while, unable to *comprehend* the certain and special *reason* of the Divine work and counsel? Added to all this, my opponent, con-

sidering the mighty *difference* between the reverence of faith, and the audacity of inquiry into God's will, a matter of no moment at all; seizes hold of that, which I teach to be a matter of faith, and preposterously hurls it into the circle of that common knowledge, which is of human conception.

Upon this absurd principle, if any one should affirm, that God hath a glorious object in his every act; and should shortly after exclaim, with the apostle, that God's "judgments are unsearchable" and "his ways past finding out;" he must, at the moment of such exclamation, be set down as a man contradicting himself.—Pighius, however, is mistaken altogether. For he calls upon me to acknowledge *my* very own words, when the passage to which he refers, is absolutely one which I had *cited* from Augustine. It is this;—"When men ask us (says that holy man) *why* God did this or that, our answer is to be, —'Because it was his will!' If they go on to inquire, *Why* did He so will it, our reply should be, 'Now thou askest that which is greater and higher than the will of God itself!—Thou askest that, which none can find out!' Let human rashness, then, keep itself within bounds. Let it never seek after that which is not; lest it should not find that which is."—Most truly does Augustine speak, in these words: and he has my fullest assent. Nor do my above sentiments contain anything which does not perfectly harmonize with these words of the holy father. My sentiments and arguments are, that the will of God is the best and most rightful adjustment of all the things that He hath made and done.

There is another objection of the same chaff which Pighius raises against my following published sentiments; —"I deny that the reprobate are distinguished and separated from the elect, by any respect of God to the merits of the latter: because the grace of God *makes* them worthy of his adoption of them: it does not *find* them worthy" (as Augustine frequently remarks). In another

place, I thus express myself,—"I deny that any injury is done to the reprobate, by their reprobation: *because* they *deserve* eternal destruction."—Here, Pighius spreads out his wings in tumultuous exultation; noisily exclaiming, that I neither understand myself nor my own sentiments, nor at all remember what I have myself before said. But so far am I from thinking it necessary to spend many words in my defence, that I can hardly bring myself to employ, even a few words, for that object. I will observe then,—that when God prefers some to others; when He chooses some and passes by others; the difference is not made on the ground of *worthiness* or *unworthiness*, either in the one or in the other. Therefore, it is false to say, that the reprobate are *worthy* eternal destruction. If, therefore, in the *former* case, there is no comparison of men with each other, nor any connexion of *worthiness* with the reward of eternal life; in the latter case, there is certainly no *proof*, that the condition of all men is *equal*, with reference to the *election of God*. Add to this, that Augustine having asserted, in one part of his writings, that no man ever failed of salvation, who was *worthy* of it; qualifies this expression, in his subsequent recapitulations; carefully excluding all idea of *works* and referring all *acceptable worthiness* to the free-grace calling of God.

Pighius, however, still pushes on his violent opposition: alleging that, if what I teach be true,—that those who perish, were ordained unto everlasting death, by the eternal will of God; of which *the reason* is imperceptible to us; the persons so ordained, *are made* worthy of everlasting death, *not found* so.—I reply, that *three* things are here to be considered.—1. That the eternal predestination of God, by which He decreed, before the fall of Adam, what should take place, in the whole human race, and in every individual thereof, was unalterably fixed and determined.—*2.* That Adam himself, on account of his departure from God, was deservedly appointed to eternal death. —3, and lastly, that, in the person of Adam, thus fallen

and lost, his whole future offspring were also eternally condemned; but so eternally condemned, that God *deems* worthy the honour of his adoption, *all those* whom He freely *chose*, out of that future offspring.—Of these mighty things, I have neither dreamed any part, nor fabricated any part. Nor am I called upon, in the present instance, to *prove* each particular; for I consider that I have most effectually done that, already. All I shall do is, to wash off from myself the calumny with which my opponent has soiled me; when he says, that these things can in no way be made to harmonize, or consist with each other. Whereas, what I have ever invariably taught, and still teach, at this day, is,—that whenever election is the subject of discussion, the great point to be maintained, from first to last, is, that all the reprobate are justly left under eternal death; *because* they died, and were eternally condemned, in Adam: also, that those perish justly, who are by nature the children of wrath; and finally, that, *therefore*, no one can have cause to complain of the too great severity of God; seeing that, *all men* bear, in themselves, and in their individual persons, the guilt and desert of death eternal.

When we come to speak of the first man, in our discussion of the doctrine of predestination; my teaching is, that we ought ever to consider the solemn case to be this;—that he, having been created perfectly righteous, fell, of his own accord, and willingly; and that, by that fall, he brought destruction eternal on himself and his whole future race. And though Adam fell not, nor destroyed himself and his posterity, either *without* the knowledge, or *without* the ordaining will, of God; yet, *that* neither lessens his own fault, nor implicates God in any blame whatever. For we must ever carefully bear in mind, that Adam, of his own will and accord, deprived himself of that perfect righteousness which he had received from God; and that, of his own accord and will, he gave himself up to the service of sin and Satan; and thus precipitated himself into destruction

eternal. Here, however, men will continually offer one uniform *excuse* for Adam;—that it was not possible for him to help or *avoid* that, which God himself had *decreed*. But, to establish the guilt of Adam for ever, his own *voluntary* transgression is enough, and more than sufficient. Nor, indeed, is the secret counsel of God the *real* and *virtual cause* of sin: but, manifestly, the *will*, and *inclination*, of *man*.

The folly of the complaint of Medea is justly derided, even by the ancient poet, when he represents her as uttering the well-known lamentation, "O that the ship, made of planks cut down by axes from the Pelian grove, had never sailed from Egina to Colchis, my native land!"—Medea had betrayed her country, carried away by the passion of a desperate love, which she had conceived for a foreigner, and an entire stranger. And when her conscience smites her for her perfidy and barbarous cruelty; when the shame of unlawful indulgence overwhelms her; she absurdly turns her thoughts of regret to various *remote* circumstances, as the *causes* of her misery. But since every human being can always find the *cause* of his evils *in himself;* of what avail is it, to look about him on every side, or to seek that *cause*, in heaven? Thus Medea's fault plainly appears, in that she had sinned voluntarily and willingly. Why, then, does she plunge herself into a labyrinth of lost thought, by rushing into the mysteries of heaven? For, although mortal men may employ their thoughts, in circuitous reasonings, ever so long and deep, they never can so far delude or stupify themselves, as not to find and feel, that they carry the *originating cause* of all their sins, deeply seated in their own hearts. Impious reasoning, therefore, will attempt in vain to absolve from the guilt of sin, that man, who stands condemned by his *own conscience*. And as to God's having, knowingly and willingly, permitted man, to fall;—his *reason* for so doing may be *hidden!* UNJUST, it cannot be! And this, moreover, should ever be held fast, without controversy;—that

sin was ever hateful to God. For that praise which David loudly bestows on the Most High, strictly applies to his adorable Majesty, in every respect, "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity." (Ps. v. 5.) Wherefore, in ordaining the fall of man, especially, God had an *end* most glorious and most just; an end, into our contemplation of which, the mention or idea, of *sin* on the part of God, can never enter; the very *thought* of its entrance, strikes us with horror!

Although, therefore, I thus affirm that God did ordain the fall of Adam; I so assert it, as by no means to concede, that God was therein, properly and really, the *author* of that fall. That I may not, however, dwell extensively on this great point, now, I will only express it, as my view, belief, and sentiment, that what Augustine so deeply teaches, on this matter, was *fulfilled* in God's ordaining the fall of Adam.—"In a wonderful and unutterable way, *that* was not done *without* the will of God (says he), which was even done *contrary* to his will: *because*, it could not have been done at all, if his will had not *permitted* it to be done. And yet, He did not permit it *unwillingly*, but *willingly*."—The great and grand principle, therefore, on which Augustine argues cannot be denied; —'that, both man, and apostate angels, as far as they were themselves concerned, did *that* which God *willed not*, or which was *contrary to* HIS WILL; but that, as far as God's *overruling Omnipotence* is concerned, they could not, in any manner, have done it, *without* his will.'—To these sentiments of the holy man I subscribe, with all my heart. I solemnly hold, that man and apostate angels *did*, by their sin, *that* which was *contrary* to the will of God; to the end, that God, by means of their *evil will*, might effect that which was *according* to his *decreeing will*. If any one should reply, that this is above the capability of his mind, to comprehend; I also acknowledge and confess the same. But why should we wonder that the *infinite* and incomprehensible majesty of God should surpass the narrow limits of our *finite* intellect? So far, however, am I from

undertaking to explain this sublime and hidden mystery, by any powers of human reason, that I would ever retain, in my own memory, that which I declared, at the commencement of this discussion;—that those who seek to know more than God has revealed, are *madmen!* Wherefore, let us delight ourselves more in wise ignorance, than in an immoderate and intoxicated curiosity to know more than God permits. Let all the powers of our mind restrain themselves within the bounds of this reverential assurance,—that God willed nothing, by the sin of man, but what *became* of his *infinite justice!*

Pighius thus continues;—"If the apostasy of man be the work of God; that which the Scripture declares is not true; when it saith, 'that all things which God doeth are very good.'" Now I can sacredly testify, and, with all candour confess, that this comment of my adversary never entered my mind. I have everywhere asserted, that man was created, in the beginning, perfectly upright. I have constantly asserted this, I say, for the very purpose of preventing the depravity, which he contracted by his fall, from being attributed to God. I have, with equal constancy, asserted, that the eternal death to which man rendered himself subject, so proceeded from his own fault, that God cannot, in any way, be considered the *author* of it. Now, if I had ever asserted, that the departure of the first man from God, proceeded, in any way, from the inspiration or motion of the Spirit of God; if I had not, on the contrary, uniformly contended, that Adam fell by the instigation of the devil, and by the impulse of his own heart; then, indeed, Pighius might justly have made his furious attack upon me. But now, removing, as I do, from God, all the *proximate cause* of the act, in the fall of man; I thereby remove from Him also all the *blame* of the act; leaving man, alone, under the *sin* and the *guilt.* While I *thus* teach, then, why does my opponent calumniously and wickedly slander me, by asserting, that I make the fall of man '*one* of the *works* of God?' But HOW it was, that

God, by his foreknowledge and decree, ordained what should take place in Adam; and yet, so ordained it, without his being himself, in the least, a participator of the fault, or being at all the author or the approver of the transgression; *how* this was, I repeat, is a secret, manifestly far too deep to be penetrated by any stretch of human intellect. Herein, therefore, I am not ashamed to confess my utter ignorance. And far be it from any one of the faithful, to be ashamed to confess his ignorance of that, which the Lord God has wholly enveloped in the blaze of his own inaccessible light!

And here, let my readers be assured, that I offer no counsel to others, which I do not follow myself, with my whole heart. For the Lord is my witness, my conscience also bearing the same witness in the Holy Ghost, that I *so* meditate upon these his stupendous judgments of God, daily, as not to feel the least curiosity or desire to know anything, beyond that which I now know, and have testified. Nor does any misgiving suspicion of God's all-surpassing justice, ever steal into my mind. Nor does any inclination to murmur ever entice my spirit. In a word, I fully rest, not less calmly than willingly, in the following sentiments of Augustine;—"God (says he), who created all things very good, foreknew that evil would arise out of that good: and he also knew, that his glorious and omnipotent goodness would be the more highly exalted, by his producing good out of evil, than by his not permitting evil to be at all. He ordained the life of angels and of men, that he might *first of all* make it manifest, by that life, what *free-will* could do; and then, afterwards show, what the blessing of his *grace*, and the *judgment of his justice*, could do."—To these Divine sentiments I would merely add (repeating my heart-felt assent to them), that, if the ears of any persons, so continually itch, that they cannot let any one of the mysteries of God remain hidden and closed: that teacher

would be worse than insane, who should attempt to satisfy such disciples by his instructions.

No! Let us rather hear, and tremble at, that which happened to David, when he was inclined to inquire into certain unusual judgments of God, which appeared in the external circumstances of persons, and of this present life, "So foolish was I (says he), and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." (Ps. lxxiii. 22.) An exalted prophet, like David (we see), could not *attempt* to be wise beyond what is lawful, without being confounded, and made to feel himself to be, as it were, a brute beast. Is it to be supposed, then, that *we* can indulge, with impunity, a preposterous wantonness of mind, in attempting to comprehend the counsel of God, the deepest of all things in heaven or earth? After Paul had testified, that God chose whom he would, out of the lost mass of mankind, and had reprobated whom he would; the apostle was so far from attempting to explain *how*, or *why*, God did so, that, overwhelmed with wonder, admiration, and awe, he burst forth into the exclamation, "O the depth!" &c. Shall we, then, unawed by that "depth," and destitute of all reverence, dare to search into the "depth" of the fall, and to inquire *how* it was, that God suffered the whole human race to fall in Adam?—I have already observed, that the fall of Adam is a standing lesson of humility to all his posterity: a lesson, from which they may learn, that *they* are nothing, in themselves, and can do nothing to regain eternal life; that Adam was perfect, and could do, perfectly; and yet, he fell!—O the depth! Now, the one and only right rule of being wise is, for the mind of man to restrain itself by that bridle of wonder,—O the depth! &c.

We have not, however, touched upon this mighty question, even thus lightly, merely *because* it was abstruse, and hidden in the inmost recess of the sanctuary of God; but *because* an idle curiosity is not to be indulged: of which

curiosity, high-minded speculation is the foster-mother and the nurse. And although I greatly approve *all* that Augustine says in his "Commentary on Genesis" (chap. xi. 4 to 8), where he is bringing all things down to form *a lesson* in the *fear and reverence of God;* yet, that other part, where he shows that God chose out of the condemned race of Adam those whom He pleased, and reprobated those whom He pleased, appears to me to be far more calculated to inspire and exercise *faith:* and his treatment of that subject, is likely to produce more abundant fruits. I, therefore, for my part, find more freedom and happiness in enforcing that doctrine, which contains, in its teaching, the corruption, sin, and guilt of human nature. This substance of doctrine, appears to me, not only to be more conducive to instruction in all fundamental godliness, but to be more theological.—Let us remember, however, that, in this latter substance of doctrine, concerning the depravity and corruption of human nature, we must reason soberly and humbly. The greatest care must be taken, that we go no farther than the Lord leads us, by his Word. For we know, too well, how captivating the allurements of the reasonings and penetrations of human wit are. Wherefore, the greater caution is to be exercised, that the simplicity of faith bind fast all our senses, by her golden chain.

Now, that God draws men unto himself, by the secret inspiration and influence of his Holy Spirit, even our daily prayers bear witness. For when we pray for our persecutors, what else do we petition for them, than that *they* may become willing to obey God, *who* were *before* unwilling; that *they* may, with us, receive the truth, *who before* resisted it; that *they* may love God, who before fought against Him? But it is openly manifest, that it is not given to *all men,* indiscriminately;—that God should, on a sudden, deem those worthy eternal life, who had deserved eternal destruction a hundred times over.—"But *how* it is (saith Augustine) that God bestows this grace, making

some, according to their *just desert*, vessels of wrath; and making others, according to *his grace*, vessels of mercy;—if we ask *how* this is, no other reply can be given than this, —'*Who* hath known the mind of the Lord?' And though the pride and insolence of the world kick violently at such a comparison, though made by the Holy Spirit himself; yet, it is by no means to be borne, that the condition of God should be worse than that of man! For what creditor, among men, has not the privilege of *demanding payment* from one creditor, and of *forgiving the debts* of another?"—This similitude is very frequently, and most appropriately, used by Augustine. "It cannot indeed be (says he) but that the natural mind of man must, in a moment, become ruffled, when he hears, that the same grace of God is denied to some, who are indeed unworthy; and freely given to others, who are, manifestly, equally unworthy. Let us, however, well consider, that, after all were equally under eternal condemnation; it is by no means lawful or right, in us, to impose on God a restraint that should prevent him from 'having mercy on whom he will.'"—Most rightly, however, does Augustine contend, that the justice of *God*, is by no means to be measured by the short rule of *human* justice. "After all has been said, that can be said, (observes he) upon this stupendous subject; let the short but awe-filled exclamation of the apostle terminate all our disputations. Let us with him stand in awe of the unsearchable mind of God, and breathe,—'O the depth!' &c. If impudent tongues make a noise; contending, or demanding more; let us never be ashamed, nor grieved, to utter the apostle's loud rebuke, 'Nay, but who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?'"

Now, though I believe I have, in my "Institutes," already refuted, with clearness and brevity, the various absurdities of opposition which my adversaries heap upon my doctrine, from all quarters, that they may calumniate and defame it; and though I think I have effectually met

and exposed many of those figments, by which ignorant persons delude and bewilder themselves; yet, as Pighius has found much delight in nibbling at my testimonies and my replies to opponents; I will not object to wash off from myself, as I proceed, his virulent soil.

Some of our adversaries have preposterously asked—How can men be certain of their salvation, if it lies in the secret counsel of God?—I have replied in these statements; which are the truth.—Since the certainty of salvation is "set forth" unto us, in Christ, it is useless, and not without dishonour to Christ himself, to pass over this fountain of life, which is thrown open that men may draw out of it, and to labour and toil, in vain, to draw the water of eternal life out of the *hidden abysses* of the mind and counsel of God! Paul testifies, indeed, that we were "chosen before the foundation of the world;" but it was, "in Christ." Let no one, then, seek confidence in his own election of God, anywhere else than "in Christ:" unless, indeed, he would blot out, and do away with, the "book of life," in which his name is written. God's adoption of us "in Christ" is for no other end than that we should be considered his children. Now the Scripture declares, that all those who believe in the only-begotten Son of God, are the children and heirs of God. Christ, therefore, is the clear glass, in which we are called upon to behold the eternal and hidden election of God: and of that election, He is also the earnest. But the eye, by which we behold that eternal life, which God sets before us, in this glass, is faith! And the hand by which we lay hold of this earnest and pledge, is faith!—If any will have the matter more plainly stated, let them take it thus;—Election *precedes* faith, as to its Divine *order;* but it is seen and understood by faith. What I here just touch upon, however, readers will find more fully explained in my "Institutes." Hence Christ, when dwelling on the eternal election of *his own*, in the counsel of the Father, points out, at the same time, *the ground* on which their confidence may safely rest; where He says, "I have mani-

fested thy name unto the men, which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." (John xvii. 6.) We see here, that God begins *with himself*, when He condescends to choose us and give us to Christ. But He will have *us* begin *with Christ*, if we would *know* that we are numbered among his "peculiar people." God the Father is said to have given us to his Son, to the end that each one of his chosen might enjoy the knowledge that he is an heir of *his* heavenly kingdom, *as long* as he abides in Christ; *out of whom*, death and destruction beset us, on every side. Christ is *therefore* said to "manifest the name" of the Father unto us, *because* He seals on our hearts by his Spirit, the knowledge of our election by the Father; which is openly declared unto us, by the voice of the Gospel of the Son.

Now if we would believe what my friend, Pighius, says, he would make it appear, that I so labour and sweat, and so turn things upside-down, so *con*found and *trans*found everything, as to make it perfectly evident, that I am condemned by my own conscience in all I write or say. Pighius, indeed, can pour out the flood of *his* characteristic loquacity with all the ease in the world, and without one drop of sweat at all. But that his tongue might have full play, he seems always to take care to wet himself well with wine, that he may be able to blow forth at random, and without any check of shame whatever, *those* blasts of abuse, that *first* fill his two swollen cheeks.—Another objection is, 'that, if the predestination of God be the immutable and inevitable *cause* of salvation; all faith and confidence, in us, and the need of them, are at once taken out of our hands.' Without offering a word of my own argument in reply to a statement so preposterously absurd, I will merely observe, that when Paul testifies, that we are made partakers of Divine adoption, *because* we were chosen before the foundation of the world; what is there, I pray, inexplicable or perplexed, in this doctrine and its connexion? For when the apostle teaches, in the

same context, that those who were thus chosen of God, *first*, were *afterwards* called according to his purpose; he beautifully harmonizes, if I mistake not, the sure confidence of our faith, with the immutable decree of the election of God.

Pighius farther reasons, thus;—"If all those who are *members of the body of Christ*, are 'written in the book of life;' then drunkards, adulterers, thieves, perjured persons, murderers, &c., &c., will inherit the kingdom of God.—All this, however, is flatly contrary to the plain testimony of the Apostle Paul: for multitudes of these have been 'engrafted into Christ,' by baptism, and have 'put on Christ.'" Now, in the first place, I would entreat my readers to direct their thoughts, for a minute, to this loose-reined profanation of the Scripture, in which Pighius so much delights to revel; and next, that they would mark the just judgment of God, in avenging that profanation: which judgment Pighius so evidently exemplifies in himself. For, with him, to trample under foot the whole of Scripture together, is nothing! Provided that he can deceive the eyes of his readers, by false colours of the Word of God, and make himself great in the estimation of the inexperienced, he will snap his finger at uprooting the very first principles of all godliness. The Lord, however, deprives him of his common senses, and exposes him to the ridicule, even of children.

Now circumcision is represented, by the Apostle Paul, as being twofold; the circumcision of "the letter," and the circumcision of "the Spirit." In the same manner also, we are ever to think and speak of *baptism*. Many bear in their bodies the *sign* only, but are far from the possession of the *reality*. Thus Peter also, after having said that we are saved by baptism, immediately declares, by way of an additional correction and caution, that the bare external washing of the flesh is not sufficient, unless there be also the answer of a good conscience. "Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh (saith he),

but the answer of a good conscience towards God." (1 Pet. iii. 21.) Wherefore the Scripture, when setting forth the Sacraments, ever speaks of them in a twofold sense. When it is dealing with hypocrites, who, glorying in the empty *sign*, disregard the *reality;* in order to prostrate the vain confidence of such, it carefully distinguishes the reality from the sign; by which distinction the perverseness of their minds is at once exposed and defeated. It is in this manner, that Paul reminds the Corinthians, (1 Cor. x. 5) that it was of no profit to the ancient people, that they were all baptized in their passage through the Red Sea, and "did all eat the same spiritual food" with us; and "did all drink the same spiritual drink" with us; that is, (Paul means,) did all partake of the same *outward signs* of spiritual gifts, with us. But when the apostle is addressing believers, he speaks of the Sacraments in their *legitimate* and *efficacious* use, as answering the ends of their Divine institution. When, therefore, Paul is *thus* speaking of the Sacraments, he uses the phrases, who have "put on Christ," who have been "engrafted into his body," who have been "buried together with him," who have been "baptized in his name," &c., in their essential meanings. But Pighius absurdly concludes, from Paul's use of these expressions, that all those who have been sprinkled with the visible element of water, are really regenerated by the Spirit, and are really incorporated into the body of Christ, so as to live unto God, and in his righteousness. Nor is he ashamed to fill page after page of his writings with such absurdities as these. Whereas, when I am speaking, in my writings, of men, generally, I call all those "members of Christ," in an *external* sense, who have been sprinkled with the water of *external* baptism. Shortly afterwards, however, Pighius draws in, a little, his expanded wings, and remarks, that many fall away from Christ, who had been really engrafted into his body; and he makes it out, that those whom Christ received from the Father, as com-

mitted to his faithfulness and care, are *so* saved by Him, as to have their salvation still dependant on their *own* free-will. "There are many (says he) who want not the protection of the grace of Christ; but who are wanting to *themselves*."

Most certainly, the indolence and ingratitude of those can never be condemned with sufficient severity, who willingly withdraw themselves from the protection of God. But it is an insult to Christ, by no means to be endured, for a man to say, that the elect of God are saved by Him, provided they take diligent care of themselves. In this manner, that protection of Christ is rendered wholly precarious and doubtful; against which, however, Christ himself declares, that the devil and all the machinations of hell shall never prevail. Christ himself promised, that He would give eternal life unto all those that were given unto Him of the Father. And He testified, that He had been a safe keeper of them all up to the day on which He thus promised: and that 'none of them was lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.' (John xvii. 2 and 12.) In another place He declares, that the elect of God are in his hands, and that no one shall pluck them out: because God is mightier than the whole world. If, then, eternal life is certain to all the elect; if no one can be plucked from the hand of Christ; if they can be torn away from Him by no violence, no desperateness of assault; if their salvation stands in the invincible might of God; what a brazen and audacious brow must Pighius possess, to attempt to shake such a certainty and security as this? But this is not all. He goes on to say, "Though Christ casts no one out, indeed; yet, many of their own will depart from Him. And those who were the children of God, for a time, do not continue such." Pighius here betrays his wickedness and perverseness, as an interpreter, by his refusing to acknowledge that all those whom the Father gave unto Christ, are safely preserved in his hands unto the end, that they

might be saved. Because, all those who fall away, are declared, by John, not to have been of Christ's flock at all. "They went out from us (says the evangelist), but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." (1 John ii. 19.)

If your doctrine and argument be true, says Pighius, that all the elect are thus secure, in the hand of Christ, "unto the end;" the condition of salvation on which Christ himself lays down, is proposed in vain: where He says, "He that endureth to the end, shall be saved." (Matt. x. 22.) Here, every one must confess, that my opponent prevaricates. He had undertaken to prove, that our confidence of our salvation could not consistently *stand with* our election of God. But now, his reasoning draws us away from that point; and leads us to prove, that the *former* necessarily *stands on* the *latter*. I thus find myself so perpetually tossed to and fro by the billows of this man's violent attacks; that scarcely a moment passes, in which I am not in danger of being drowned. But, as God ever upholds his elect, to prevent them from sinking, I feel quite confident, that I shall stand against all my adversary's incessant storms. When Pighius asks me, *how I know* that I am elected? my answer is, "Christ is, to me, more than a thousand witnesses." For when I find myself engrafted into his body, my salvation rests in a place so safe, secure, and tranquil, that it is as if I already realized it in heaven. If Pighius say, in reply, that the eternal election of God cannot be judged of by *present grace*; I will not attempt, on my part, to bring forward, as proofs, those feelings which believers experience in this matter: because, it is not given unto "strangers" even to taste that bread on which the "children" of God feed. But when Pighius dares to prate, that it is nowhere found, in the Scripture, that the children of God *know* their eternal election by

their present grace; a falsehood, so bare and base, is disproved by the Word of God, in a moment.—After Paul had testified, that those who were elected are called and justified, and at length attain unto a blessed immortality; fortified, as it were, by a strong bulwark on every side, he thus exults and triumphs, "Who shall stand against God's elect," &c. And that no one might suppose this doctrine of security to apply to all men, generally; he directly afterwards applies it to the peculiar use of each believer; "For I am persuaded, (says he) that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. viii. 33 and 38, 39.) Now, whereas, Pighius will have it that the believer's confidence of eternal salvation may be broken short, at any moment; Paul extends it into futurity, and into an eternity beyond the limit of this present life; and demonstrates, that such a confidence proceeds from no other source, than from God's election! Pighius, on the contrary, so represents the believer's confidence, and his election, as *opposite* and *contradictory*, that he makes them destroy each other.

"What, then, does Ezekiel mean (inquires Pighius) when he denounces destruction on the righteous man, if he shall turn aside from the right way?" (Ezek. xviii. 26.) Now we deny not, that there are sometimes in the reprobate, many things, which are found also in the children of God: but how brightly soever they may shine with the appearance of righteousness, it is quite certain that they never proceeded from the spirit of adoption. Such reprobate persons, thus apparently righteous, could never truly call upon God, as their Father. For Paul testifies, that *none* are ever "led" by that spirit of adoption, but *the sons of God*, whom he also pronounces to be "heirs" of eternal life. Were it otherwise, that which the same apostle testifies, in another place, would not

stand good; where he says, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God." And again, "But we have the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. ii. 12 and 16.) Were it otherwise (we repeat), the apostle Paul would have in vain called that Spirit, by which the faithful are sealed, "the *earnest* of their *future inheritance.*" But, that the right knowledge of our election of God strengthens our faith in our final perseverance, *that one* prayer of Christ ought to furnish an abundant proof; in which, He commends all the elect to his heavenly Father, separating them, by name, from the world; and praying, that when this world should be no more, they might remain saved from all its evil, being made "perfect" and "one," with himself and the Father, in glory. (John xvii.)

Then follows another objection of Pighius;—"It is not without purpose (says he) that Paul warns all the faithful to take heed that they 'receive not the grace of God in vain.' Nor is it without a purpose, that Christ exhorts all his disciples to 'watch and pray.'" But if we understand and hold fast the important difference between the unconcerned security of the flesh, and that tranquil stayedness of mind, which faith produces; the knot of this objection is untied, at once. Believers ought to rest in the certainty of their salvation. But for what end? That they might lie still in sleepy quiet? That they might throw themselves down in cowardly indolence? O! no! But rather that, as they thus enjoy a quiet rest in God, they might give themselves the more unto prayer. Paul exhorts such to "work out their salvation with fear (*timore*) and trembling" (*tremore*). (Phil. ii. 12.) Why is this exhortation? Is it that they might live in fear and uncertainty as to the issue? By no means. But that, nestling under the shadow of the wings of God, they might continually commit themselves unto his care, depending on Him alone; and so resting in his almighty

power, as not to doubt of their being victorious unto the end. For Paul immediately subjoins the *reason why* the faithful should be thus anxious to shelter under the wings and omnipotent power of God; 'For it is God (saith he) that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.' (Phil. ii. 13.) Moreover that the faithful might not remain in hesitation and suspense, he had already relieved them from all possible doubt. "Being confident (saith he) of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 6.) The Holy Spirit, therefore, nowhere exhorts us to the care and exercise of prayer, under any idea, that our salvation fluctuates in a state of uncertainty or doubt: for it rests safely in the hand of God. He nowhere imposes upon us a fear, which might tend, in any way, to shake our confidence in the free love of God. No! The blessed Spirit, by such exhortations as these, designs only to quicken our natural slothfulness and unconcern.

It is to carry out, and enforce, this last objection of his also, that Pighius calumniously twists and perverts the words of the apostle in the eleventh chapter of his epistle to the Romans: "And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell severity: but towards thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." (Rom. xi. 17 to 22.) But the real meaning of this passage is as follows:—

After the apostle had, in this chapter, spoken of the two-fold election of his nation (the national, and the eternal); and had shown that, by the falling away of many of them, it had come to pass, that those who before had been the legitimate and proper heirs of life, by means of the covenant which God had established with their fathers, were "broken off," and cast out, as banished from his kingdom;—after speaking thus of his own nation, Paul directs his word to the Gentiles; warning them not to triumph over the Jews, nor to offer them any insult, because God had taken *them* into *their* place. Now we are here carefully to observe, that, as the universal rejection of the Jews did not at all alter or shake the fixed election of God, so as to prevent Him from saving some "remnant" of them; so, the universal election of the Gentiles did not embrace every individual of the Gentiles, so as to make them *all* sharers of eternal life. Paul, I repeat, is here speaking of God's two-fold election of the Jewish nation. For the whole family of Abraham had been, in a certain sense, elected of God. But as many of them were not ordained unto eternal life by God's secret judgment and counsel, the *greater number* perished; though the election of God still rested on the "*remnant.*" *Now*, however, that the covenant of life is transferred to the Gentiles, *that* general adoption of the family of Abraham belongs to us. But this does not prevent those few of the family of Abraham from still enjoying their adoption, who were ordained thereunto, by the secret good-pleasure and decree of God.

Paul, therefore, when thus contrasting the Gentiles with the Jews, calls the former "wild olive trees" engrafted on the original sacred root, after its natural branches had been broken off. Nor is the apostle here speaking of individuals, in a private sense: nor is he treating of the secret election of God, abstractedly. He is showing what a mighty change of things was made, when the legitimate children were rejected, and strangers substituted in their

place. The whole of this exhortation of Paul, is not so much addressed to those believers, who had truly, and in heart, received the grace of God, as to the whole body of the Gentiles, which was promiscuously composed of various members, believers and unbelievers. And yet, there is nothing singular in God's restraining the pride and insolence of the flesh, in his own Gentile children; seeing that, they all labour under this corrupt infirmity. But Pighius most ridiculously concludes, from the above exhortation of the apostle, that the certainty of God's election, and its final accomplishment, depend upon the perseverance of men. This conclusion of Pighius is, we repeat, most absurd; because, in the falling away of all men, generally, from God, his eternal election must, nevertheless, stand and prevail.

As to the profane, who stigmatize the judgment of God, representing it under an utterly false colour, and saying, "It is in vain for the reprobate to strive after righteousness and holiness; because, according to the doctrine of election, they must ultimately and inevitably perish."—Such a calumny, as it is the offspring of the grossest ignorance, may be shaken off from us by a very brief reply, thus;—There can be no real desire of doing good in men, which does not proceed from God's election of them. The reprobate, however, made, as they are, vessels unto dishonour, never cease to provoke the vengeance of God upon themselves: thereby manifestly proving, as in written characters, that they are ordained to destruction. To Pighius, however, such a doctrine is the very climax of absurdity. So much so, that he declares there is no monstrosity equal to it, to be found in all the discussions of this subject put together. But by this one declaration, it is manifest, that *he* is so carried away by a rabid lust of reviling all that is good, that abuses boil over, out of his breast, without any real occasion whatever.—The Scripture plainly teaches, that none but the elect of God are ever ruled, or "led," by his

Spirit. What rectitude or right-doing then can there be in man, without the "leading" of the Holy Spirit? Hence it is that Paul saith "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." (Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.) And he elsewhere declares, that all the thoughts of the carnal mind are "enmity against God." (Rom. viii. 7.)

What inconsistency, then, is there in my affirming, that all those who are not regenerated by the Spirit of God, are the slaves of sin, and carried headlong, at the will of the flesh. Those whom God chooses, He justifies by his own righteousness. What marvel, then, if the reprobate, who are destitute of the righteousness of God, should do nothing, nor know how to do anything, but sin? God has chosen *his own* for the very end that they might be "holy and without blame." If then holiness be the fruit of free-election, who can but confess, that all the rest of men remain sunk in the filth and profanity of nature? Christ declares, that none can hear his voice but his own sheep. And He asserts, on the other hand, that all those who will not hear the voice of the Father, sounding in *his* mouth, "are of their father the devil." (John viii. 43, 44.)—When Pighius wants to show that reprobates study to do good works: he must, to be consistent, also show, that their obstinacy is pleasing to God. But Pighius, in support of his doctrine, that the reprobate really do devote themselves to good works, argues, that Saul excelled in many virtues. Nay, that he pleased God.—That the virtues which shine in the reprobate are laudable in themselves, I by no means deny. And this is what the Scripture means, when it says, that Saul, and others of the same character, "did what was right." But as God looks at the heart, the fountain from which all works flow; a work which is, in a general sense, good

in itself, may, nevertheless, be an "abomination, in the sight of God." In fact, this first principle of all godliness is wholly unknown to Pighius;—'that there is nothing so pure, that the uncleanness of man will not defile.' It is no wonder, therefore, that our opponent, looking at the works of Saul, while wearing his external mask, lauds his innocence and virtues. When Pighius contends, that Saul did, in one instance, please God; I grant it; and I make this case an exception to my general remark. God did, indeed, so honour him, in his office as king, that the house of Israel, as we find in the Scripture, never once censured him: as Ezekiel also testifies. So, Judas was chosen to the apostolic office. Will Pighius conclude, that Judas was *therefore* numbered among the children of God? But my opponent caluminates all this my testimony: making me to be speaking, all the time, of the single actions of life, abstractedly considered. Whereas, I am speaking of the continuous course and tenor of life. In a word; if we make not all the goodness and righteousness that can be found in man to proceed from the Spirit of sanctification, the whole testimony of the Scriptures must be shaken.

It is useless to spend farther time and trouble in replying to the other cavils of our adversary. His next objection is in every enemy's mouth;—"All teaching is vain, and all exhortation worthless, if strength and power to obey wholly depend on the election of God." And this farther cavil is akin to it;—"Men will, as an inevitable consequence, give themselves up to indolence and unconcern, when they are thus taught to rest in the eternal counsel of God."—The replies to these objections, already given by me, in my "Answers," are so attacked by Pighius, with his usual abuse, that I will allow them to remain quiet; and will not repeat them here to be defiled again by his hands. But if there be any ultra-morose ones, who are not yet satisfied; and who consider that there is more weight in the testimony of Augustine

(which acknowledgment I have often and willingly made myself); I will produce his sentiments on this subject, in his own words; thereby testifying my own assent to their truth. His words, as found in his book, entitled, "On the blessing of Perseverance," are these.—"Men say, that the doctrine of predestination stands adverse to *all preaching;* rendering it altogether useless. According to this, the preaching of Paul himself, was altogether useless, which was full of this doctrine. Did not this great teacher of the Gentiles preach the doctrine of predestination continually? But did we ever hear of his ceasing to preach the Word of God, because he found his preaching *useless?* Paul preached, 'It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure.' But do we ever find that, on that account, he ceased to exhort us 'to will,' and wish those things which please God, and 'to work,' ourselves, with all our power?—Paul preached, 'He that hath begun the good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.' But did he ever cease to persuade men to begin, themselves, and to persevere unto the end? Nay, the Lord himself called upon men to believe in Him. And yet, his declaration is eternally true, and his description not without its solemn purpose, when he testifies, 'No man can come unto (that is, no one can believe in) me, unless it were given him of my Father.' (John vi. 65.) Nor, on the other hand, is the *exhortation* of the Lord *to believe* vain, *because* his description of those who *alone do* believe, is true. How can it be said, that the doctrine of predestination stands against preaching, and exhortation, and correction, and renders them useless (which are *all* so frequently used in Scripture), when the same Scripture speaks so much of predestination also?"

Shortly afterwards, the holy father remarks, "Those hear these things, and do them, to whom *it is given.* But those to whom it is *not* given, do them *not;* whether they hear them not, or hear them. Neither, therefore, is the preaching of fruitful and persevering faith to be

withheld, *because* of the necessity of preaching predestination; in order that men, by the preaching of the *former*, might hear those things which they ought to do; and that they, *to whom it is given*, might do them. 'But how shall they hear (as the apostle argues) without a preacher?' Nor, on the other hand, is the preaching of predestination to be withheld, *because* of the necessity of preaching that faith which is fruitful, and which persevereth unto the end: in order that, he who lives in faith and obedience may not glory in his obedience, as being his own, but the gift of God; as it is written, 'He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.'"—"And again (continues Augustine), as he that hath received the gift so to do, rightly exhorteth and preacheth; so he that hath received the gift so to do, heareth and obeyeth. Hence it is, that the Lord so frequently saith, 'He that hath ears to hear let him hear.' And from whom, those who have the gift, receive it, the Lord himself shows us. 'I will *give* them (saith he) a heart to know me, and ears to hear me.' Ears to hear, therefore, are the gift, itself, of all obedience; with which all those who are endowed, come to Christ. *Wherefore*, we both PREACH and EXHORT. Those who have ears to hear, hear us, and obey; but in those who have not, that solemn Scripture is fulfilled, 'That hearing they might hear and not understand:' hearing, indeed, with the outward ear of the body, but not with the inward ear of the heart.—But *why* it is given to one, to hear, and not to another; *why*, it is given of the Father, to some, to come unto the Son, and not to others;—Do we ask this question? The reply is, 'Who hath known the mind of the Lord?'—Are we, then, *therefore*, to deny what is *manifest*, *because* we cannot comprehend what is *hidden?*"

"From this is plainly seen (continues the holy man) how preposterous the extreme caution of those is, who, through fear of some supposed absurdity or contradiction in it, would hide, or altogether suppress, a doctrine, most necessary to be known. But suppose that some, upon

hearing the doctrine of predestination, give themselves up to indolence and unconcern, and rush headlong from diligence and labour, into concupiscence, following their own lusts; is all that is said, in the Scripture, concerning the *foreknowledge* of God, *therefore* to be considered untrue? Would not those have been *good*, if God had *foreknown* that they would be *good*, although they are now revelling in wickedness? And if God foreknew that they *would be* evil, evil *they will be*, in whatever goodness they may now appear to shine. Are then, all those things which the Scripture saith, in truth, concerning the prescience of God, to be *denied*, or held in *silence*, *because* such cases as these are found among men? And that too when it is certain, that if these truths were not declared, men would nevertheless rush into other errors of some kind?

"A *reason for not declaring* the truth (continues Augustine), is one thing; the *necessity of declaring* the truth, is another. To enumerate the various reasons assigned for the propriety of *not* declaring the truth, would exceed both our limits and our purpose. One reason assigned is,—Lest those, who do not understand, should be made worse; while we are wishing that those, who do understand, may be made wiser and better. But those who are not made wiser and better, by any certain doctrine of truth which we teach, are assuredly not made worse. But where the reality of the case is, that when we are declaring a doctrine of truth, he who cannot understand it, is rendered worse by our declaration of it; while he, who can understand it, is rendered worse by our keeping silence;—What is to be done (it is asked) in such a case as this? Why; is it not much better, that the truth should be declared, in order that he who *can* receive it, may receive it, than that it should be kept back in silence, that *neither* may receive it? For by this silence, *both* are rendered worse; he that does, and he that does not, understand. Whereas, he that does understand, might, by hearing the truth and receiving it, teach others also. Hence, some of us are

unwilling to declare and teach that, which, according to the testimony of Scripture, we ought to declare and teach. And the cause of this our fear is, lest, by our speaking out, *he* should be offended who cannot understand us. Whereas we ought *also* to fear, lest, by our silence, *he* who *would have* understood us, had we spoken, should be left to be carried away, perhaps, by the false teaching of others."

This sentiment, thus briefly expressed, Augustine afterwards expands and confirms, in the following manner.—"Wherefore, if the apostles and those teachers of the Church who followed them, performed the two-fold service;—solemnly holding forth the doctrine of God's eternal election, and also, retaining the faithful under the discipline of a Godly life; why should these men of our day think they act rightly, in the matter of their teaching, by keeping themselves shut up, in silence, within the strong tower of invincible truth? holding, as they do, that though what is said concerning election be eternally true, yet, that it ought not to be preached openly to the people? On the contrary, however, the doctrine of election *ought* to be preached constantly and thoroughly: that he that hath 'ears to hear,' might hear. And who *hath* these 'ears,' but he who *hath received* them from Him who hath promised to *give* them? Wherefore, let him that receiveth not the truth, reject it. But let him that heareth and understandeth the truth, receive it and drink it; and drink, and live! As therefore *godliness* is to be *preached*, that God may be rightly obeyed and worshipped; so is *predestination* to be *preached* also; that he who 'hath ears to hear' the free grace of God, might glory in God, and not in himself."

Hence, though there was, in this holy man Augustine, a singular devotedness to the edifying of the Church; yet, he so wisely tempers the *system* of preaching the truth, that he would have offence guarded against, (where it can be done lawfully,) with all prudence. His admoni-

tion is, that whatsoever truths are preached, should be preached, at the same time, *consistently*. He remarks,—"If any one should address the people and say, If ye believe not, it is because ye are predestinated of God to eternal destruction; such an one, would not only foster his own indolence, but would indulge malice towards his hearers. If a preacher should extend his sentiments into the future, and should say, that those who heard him never *would* believe, *because* they were reprobates; such preaching would be IMPRECATION, not DOCTRINE!" Teachers of this description Augustine would have expelled from the Church at once, (and most deservedly), as foolish or designing prophets, from whom no good can be expected. And the holy father elsewhere truly contends, that a preacher then profits others, when he pities them, and helps them forward; and who invites those, whom he wishes to benefit, to proceed in the right way, without any appeal to them in the form of *taunting rebuke*. But *why* some profit by the preaching of the Word and some profit not; far be it from us to say, that this is according to the judgment or wisdom of the "clay;" when it is all according to the will and wisdom of the "potter!"

When men *do* come into the way of righteousness, or return into it, by means of *holy* correction or rebuke;—who is it that works salvation in their hearts, but He who 'giveth the increase,' whoever soweth, or whoever watereth? No free will of man can resist Him that willeth to save. Wherefore, we are to rest assured, that no *human wills* can resist the *will* of God, who doeth, according to his will, all things, in heaven and in earth; and who *has already* done, *by his will*, the things that *shall be* done. No will of men, we repeat, can resist the will of God, so as to prevent Him from doing what He willeth; seeing that He doeth what He *will*, with the *wills* themselves of all mankind. And when it is his will to bring men by any certain way that He may please, does He bind their bodies, I pray you, with chains? O! no!—He works

within; He *takes hold* of their hearts *within;* He *moves* their hearts *within*; and draws them by those, now, *new wills* of their own, which He has himself wrought in them.—But that which Augustine adds, in continuation, must by no means be omitted. "Since we know not (says he) who belongeth to the number of the predestinated, and who doth not, we ought so *to feel,* as *to wish* ALL to be saved. From this it will come to pass, that whosoever shall come in our way, we shall desire to make him a partaker of the peace which we ourselves enjoy. 'Our peace,' however, will nevertheless '*rest* upon the *sons* of peace.' Wherefore, as far as we ourselves are concerned, wholesome and even severe correction will ever be made use of by us, as a *medicine* towards all men; both to save them from perishing themselves, and to prevent them from causing others to perish. But it will be of God alone to make that medicine *beneficial* to those whom He *foreknew,* and *predestinated.*"—If then these things be true; and if they be thus testified by a witness so eminent, as the chief of the holy fathers, let them not be vomited forth from the mouths of hatred, upon the head of Calvin, by his ignorant and evilly-disposed persecutors. I would, however, that these insipid cautious ones, who so much desire to please by their teary moderation, would just consider, that Augustine, to whom they so willingly yield the palm of *knowledge* in Divine things, surpasses them, just as far, in *modesty* also. This conviction would tend to prevent them from puffing off their soured timidity for real modesty.

But now let me deal, a little farther, with Pighius.—My readers must bear in mind *three* special and summary particulars.—First, that whatever mountain of absurdities he heaps up, to launch at my doctrine, with a design to its suppression, is hurled, not so much at me, as at God himself!—Secondly, in order that he may wrest out of my hands those passages of the Scripture, which make for me, he shews himself so ignorant a trifler, as to make it mani-

fest, that he cannot support his own cause in any other way, than by corrupting and subverting the Bible, altogether. And lastly, that he rushes headlong into such an extreme of impudence, as to appeal, without hesitation, to Augustine himself, as an authority for his absurdities.—"If God (argues this worthless and daring mortal) created any men for destruction, He is not worthy of being loved. Those poor creatures, who were deprived of eternal life *before they were born*, are more deserving of pity, than of punishment."—Now, if the testimonies which this aweless being attempts to shake, were *mine*; he would be fighting against a mortal man. But since it is God himself, whom he thus insults and reproaches, I shall feel no shame in applying to him, a hundred times over, the solemn appeal of the apostle, "Nay, but who art thou, O man, that contendest against thy Maker!" This miserable mortal feels *now*, and all his fellows will *hereafter* feel, the effects of those reproaches, which they hurl at God, from their foul and profane mouths. Such reproaches fail and fall by the weight of their own wickedness, long before they reach heaven. Their only certain course is to fall back, with all their weight, upon the heads of those who utter them.—Let me be permitted just to produce one specimen of this rebel's foul madness, in adulterating the Scripture. The ninth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, is both confounded and dismembered, in the following manner.—

At his commencement,—to save all labour and trouble in untying the Gordian knot, he cuts it right in halves (as he thinks) by this one word. He says, that Israel was chosen of God, but not all *Israelites; because*, (he says) the descendants of Israel did not all truly represent their father, Israel, who received that name from "*seeing*." And from this he concludes, that God's election becomes not real and ratified, in any, but in *those* who "*open their eyes*." But this pre-eminent teacher of clear-sightedness, in interpreting the *name*, Israel, is most ridiculously

stone-blind himself, while thus vainly attempting to make a sharp point out of a blunt log. Meantime, this blind instructor never thinks of the fact, that Israel (the 'open-eyed' one, according to his lucid interpretation) was *made* 'open-eyed' by the peculiar grace of God: for he had been chosen of God, even in the womb of his mother. Nor do any others ever possess 'eyes,' *to see God*, or his truth, but those whose minds God himself enlightens by his Spirit. And those only are deemed worthy the light of his Spirit, whom He adopted for himself, even while still in their blindness, and whom He makes his children. After this, Pighius, like a wild beast escaped from his cage, rushes forth, bounding over all fences in his way, uttering such sentiments as these;—"The mercy of God is extended to every one: for God wishes all men to be saved: and for that end, He stands and knocks at the door of our heart, desiring to enter. Therefore, *those* were elected, before the foundation of the world, by whom He foreknew He *should be* received. But God hardens no one, excepting by his forbearance: in the same manner as too fond parents ruin their children by excessive indulgence." —Just as if any one, by such puerile dreams as these, could escape the force of all those things which the apostle plainly declares, in direct contradiction to such sentiments! And just as if it were nothing at all to his readers, when Paul positively asserts, that, out of the twins, while they were yet in the womb of their mother, the one was *chosen* and the other *rejected!* and that too, without any respect to the works of either, present or future; (of the former of which there could be none); but solely by the good pleasure of God that calleth! As if it were nothing, when the apostle testifies, that "it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;" who hardeneth whom He will, and hath mercy on whom He will! As if it were nothing, when the same apostle avers, "that God sheweth forth his power *in the vessels of wrath*;" in order "that He might make known the riches of his grace

on the vessels of mercy!"—Paul undeniably here testifies, that all those of Israel who were saved, were saved according to God's free election; and that, therefore, "the election obtained it, and the rest were blinded." (Rom. xi. 7.)—All these solemn particulars, however, we have more fully discussed, in their order, in our preceding pages.

If our opponent were a hundredfold more acute, and clever than he is, all the cavils he could muster would never prevent even the deaf from hearing the loud thunder of the above declarations of the apostle. And yet, after having heaped up words, mountain on mountain, he leaves this feeble mountain of his own, standing at last,—"God did not create *those* reprobates, *whom* He foresaw would be such; but He *knew* that some whom He *should* create, *would* be reprobates." But what is all this folly more, or less, than bedaubing the eyes of the potter, and his hands also, in order that we might not be able to discern his real form and features, nor to see his work?—And it is just the same when he attempts to disentangle himself from the Divine net of the apostle which lies hidden in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians. He so sports and flourishes his bombast, as if, by his loud empty noise, he could strike even the apostle himself dumb, and force him to be silent. "God (says this vain mortal) chose us in Christ, *because* He *foreknew* that his grace, which otherwise was free to all, would *find a place* in *us only;* and that we alone should receive it. He chose us out of all men, *because* He foresaw that *that* which was set before all men for their reception would become peculiar to *us;* who alone would receive it. It was *thus* that He chose us 'to the glory of his grace,' which sanctifies us: just in the same manner, as the praise of all belongs to the preceptor; while *doctrine,* and its *benefit,* belong to the *scholar.*"—As if that eternal purpose, which Paul elsewhere sets forth in opposition to all human works, were not the purpose of *God alone!* As if the glory of free grace were not, in this passage, more strikingly exhibited, under the expres-

sion the "good pleasure of God," than by any other terms! Why! God is said to have saved us, "according to his good pleasure which He purposed in himself" for this very reason,—*because*, finding no *cause* in us, He *made himself* the *cause* of our salvation. Is it for nothing, think ye, that the apostle repeats, five times over, that the whole of our salvation is the effect of, and dependent upon, *that* eternal decree, purpose, and good pleasure of God? Is it with no intent whatever, that the apostle declares, that we were "blessed" in Christ, *because* we were "chosen" in Christ? Does not the apostle refer all sanctification, and every good work, to the election of God, as waters are traced to their originating source? Does not Paul attribute it to the same grace, that we are the "workmanship of God, created unto good works, which He hath before ordained that we should walk in them?" Why did God choose us out, and separate us from the rest, but that we might *know* that we *are* what *we are*, and that we are blessed above all others, by the free favour of God alone? Behold! then, readers, how *sweetly (!)* God's *foreknowledge* of good works *in us*, according to the doctrine of Pighius, *harmonizes (!)* with the apostle's context, in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians! How much better would it have been, in our opponent, to have retained the character of an admirer of the apostle, which, for a moment, he was compelled to assume; than to have turned thus aside, on a sudden, to haughty speculations, and to have thrown off the mask of the admirer altogether, to his own exposure.—These great subjects, however, which I had more fully digested in the former part of this work, I have now only cursorily touched with the lip.

This worthless being, Pighius, indeed, flogs Augustine severely, for being a man (as he says) who, in the discussion of this great subject, betrays more violent impetuosity than calm reason; one who dashes up against this thing, and that person, in his way; and who brings forth those things, which

seem to be utterly at variance with the goodness of God. And yet, this same vain mortal, devoid of every feeling of modesty, appeals to this same holy father's authority, in confirmation of his own absurdities. And with what impudence he does this, I will demonstrate, in a few short words.—He lauds the industry of the holy man, for his having so carefully winnowed this important question, in his book written to Simplicianus, Bishop of Mediola. But did this fellow really ever open that book? I doubt it. Because, he makes it to be *one* book, instead of *two*. And it is something rather marvellous, that this very eminent interpreter should have singled out this production of Augustine, from all his other works; which work, the holy father himself acknowledges that he wrote, at the commencement of his episcopate. For although Augustine wrote that book against Pelagius, he does not hesitate candidly to confess, that he afterwards wrote much more fully and solidly on that subject. His own words are these,—"The predestination of the saints is, indeed, set forth by me, in that book. But necessity afterwards compelled me to defend that doctrine with greater industry and labour, when I was contending for the truth against the Pelagians. For I always found, that each heresy, as it arose, brought its own questions into the Church; against which, the Divine Scripture required defence, with greater diligence, than if no such necessity had arisen."

But let us now see what that authority is, which this impudent person adduces from the works of Augustine. "My author (says he) stands in the opinion, that the rejection, or contempt, of vocation, is the *cause* of reprobation: and this opinion he fully affirms."—Now the fact is, that the mind of Augustine is directly the contrary. For in his book, entitled "Recollections," he says, "I once laboured hard, for the free-will of man; until the grace of God at length overcame me."—But I will omit to notice here, what he farther says, in the book now in question, and

in other places before cited by me, wherein he is explaining his mind; which is of more value, to the faithful at least, than a thousand opinions of Pighius, or of any others like him. How then does Pighius dare, with something more than impudence, to refer to Augustine, as an authority for those sentiments, which, throughout his whole work, he rejects, with a determination quite as great as the candour with which he condemns them.—But that I may not pursue these observations too far, I only observe that those authorities which Pighius adduces, are indeed extant in the work of Augustine in question: but the fact is, that they are refuted in the same page on which they are found. "If (argues Augustine) the Scripture saith, 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy;' *because* the will of man alone is not sufficient to enable him to live justly and righteously, unless it be aided by the mercy of God: if this be the case, we might just as well argue, and the Scripture might just as well say, 'It is not of God that showeth mercy, but of man that willeth.' For, according to this, the mercy of God is not sufficient, unless it be aided by the consent of *our will.* But the truth and the fact are, that *our willing* is vain, unless God *have mercy.* But how shall it be said (I know not), that God's having mercy is vain, unless we also *will?* For where God hath mercy, *we* are sure to have *will:* because, the very nature of that mercy, when shown, is to make us *willing;* according to that word of the apostle, 'For it is God that worketh in you both to *will* and to *do.*' For if it be inquired whether or not a good will be the gift of God, who will be found so daring as to deny it?"

Shortly afterwards, Augustine draws this conclusion:—"Wherefore, the truth is, that 'it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy:' because, although God *calleth* many; yet He hath mercy on those only, whom He *so calleth,* as to make that call effectual in them, that they may follow it. Hence,

it would be utterly false, if any one were to say, 'It is not of God that showeth mercy, but of man that willeth.' Because, God hath mercy on no one ineffectually, or in vain. On whomsoever God hath mercy, him He so calleth, as to make the manner of his calling effectual; so that he *shall not refuse* Him that calleth." Wherefore, Pighius spoke with the greatest truth, when he said, in his prefatory remarks, that this great question of predestination had been industriously winnowed by Augustine, in his book addressed to Simplicianus. But he himself most grievously transgresses in the matter. For while he is catching at the chaff, blown about in the air, he disregards altogether the wheat that is evidently left upon the floor.

But some small space must now be found for dealing with Georgius of Sicily. All things connected with this miserable creature are so insipid, vain, and disgusting, that I really feel ashamed to spend any time or labour in his refutation. Nor would I condescend to enter the field with this shadow, if the silly consternation of many at his pretensions did not compel me to do so. And I doubt not that there will be many, who, from their considering the easy victory which I must of necessity gain over his trifling puerilities, will quite deride my needless attempt. Indeed, if he were not a mischievous person, I should consider him much more worthy of being trampled under foot in contempt, than of being refuted by the use of words. But as his books, flying throughout Italy, drive many mad, on every side; I had rather, in such a kind of necessity, act a little of the madman myself, with such a mad fellow, than suffer, by silence, so much mischief to be done in the Church by *his* madness. When, of old, the prophet Ezekiel saw, that certain old prophetesses were blinding the eyes of the people, he felt no shame in entering into the battle with women. (Ezek. xiii. 17.) Let us, therefore, if we would be the true servants of Christ, not feel aggrieved at being compelled to take up arms, for

the purpose of driving away those, whosoever they may be, who are labouring, with all their might, to throw their chaff into the granary of the Lord.

When we testify that men are predestinated, either to salvation, or to destruction, by the eternal counsel of God; Georgius considers, that we hallucinate, and are deceived, in that matter, on *three accounts*, in particular. The *first* of which, he says, is, that we are ignorant, that the word election is received, in different senses, in the Scripture. For God, he observes, is sometimes said to elect or choose certain persons, to a certain temporal office; where no mention whatever is made of eternal life, nor any consideration of it entertained. But by what kind of arguments will this stupid trifler attempt to persuade *us*, that we are so inexperienced in the Scriptures as not yet to know, that Saul, who was really a reprobate, was yet *chosen*, or elected, to be king? and that Judas, who was one of the twelve, whom Christ declares that he himself had *chosen*, was called by Christ *a devil?* Why does not this vain fellow point out some passages of the Scripture, as having been *evilly* and *impiously* brought forward by *us*, in support of *our* testimony, which will make our errors manifest? The fact is, that this dreamer fabricates dreams of his own, which are the children of his own brain; and against these he wages war, as if they really were *our* dreams. And yet it is marvellous, meanwhile, how utterly he forgets himself, and his own precept concerning the different meanings of the word election, when he attacks us, and applies to us the words of the apostle, "Lest, after I have preached the Gospel to others, I myself should become a reprobate" (or a castaway). For he concludes, from this passage, that Paul (according to the doctrine of election) positively uttered a falsehood, when he expressed his fear, lest the immutable election of God, should fail, in *his* case; and that he really knew not, or was not certain of, his own election. Now this miserable being does not see, that "reprobate" (or 'disapproved') is, in this passage,

opposed to 'approved.' And 'approved' would signify, that such an 'approved' one had given sure evidences, and proofs, of his godliness. How was it, that the different meanings of the term "reprobate" did not come into the mind of our silly opponent? For when "reprobate silver" is spoken of in the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. vi. 30), and "reprobate earth," in Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. vi. 8), it does not mean, that such "reprobate silver," or "reprobate earth," was ordained of God to eternal destruction; but that it was silver and earth that had become alloyed, adulterated, unfruitful, and worthless. And that the term "reprobate" applies to men, in this passage of the apostle, as it doth also in another epistle, is at once manifest, in each place, from the context. And yet, the election to any temporal office, is so plainly distinct from that eternal election, by which God chooses and adopts us unto everlasting life, that the Scripture sometimes joins them together, in the same person; on account of their immediate affinity.

Thus, when Paul glories that God "separated" him from his "mother's womb," he is speaking of his apostolic office. But the same apostle, ascending yet higher, glories, at the same time, in the grace of God also, by which he had been then called unto the hope of salvation. In like manner Christ, although he declares that one of those whom he had chosen to the apostolic office was a devil; yet elsewhere joins the grace of adoption, with the apostolic honour; saying, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you; that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." For he declares, that *his own* were given to him of the Father, for the very end that he should not suffer any one of them to perish, save *him* who was already "the son of perdition." Although, therefore, we everywhere read in the Scriptures, that God chose these or those, to this or that kind of life, or to this or that temporal office; such facts do not at all alter the greater fact, that God chose unto salvation those whom

He was pleased to save. Nor did the one election militate against, contradict, contravene, or impede, the other.

The *second* account on which Georgius declares we are in error and delusion, is, because we do not hold, that *all* the believers (as he calls them) of the New Testament, were chosen unto salvation, as those were of whom the apostle speaks, in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians. But we have already more than fully shown, that Paul, in that chapter, traces the faith, by which the children of God enter upon the possession of their salvation, unto eternal election, as its true and only source. And, most certainly, faith is especially to be reckoned among those spiritual riches, which are freely given to us in Christ. And from whence does Paul testify, that all and every one of our spiritual blessings flow, but from that eternal and hidden fountain,—the free adoption of of God? Again,—the apostle uses these words, "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence." How did God thus abound? And from what source did this abundance flow? The apostle tells us immediately afterwards,—"According to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself." (Vers. 8, 9.)

Wherefore, if faith be the fruit of Divine election, it is at once evident, that *all* are not enlightened unto faith. Hence, it is also an indubitable fact, that those on whom God determined in himself to bestow faith, were chosen of Him from everlasting, for that end. Consequently, the sentiments of Augustine are truth, where he thus writes: —"The elect of God are chosen by Him to be his children, in order that they *might be made* to believe; not because He foresaw that they *would* believe."—I forbear to cite here other passages of the apostle similar to the above; because they will have to be considered very shortly in their proper place. But as there is one passage in the Evangelist Matthew, where the elect of God seem to be spoken of as an infinite number; where Christ himself says, that "there shall be such great signs and wonders shown, by

false christs and false prophets, that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect;" Georgius explains "the elect," in this place, as signifying all those who persevere in faith and righteousness. And this interpretation is perfectly right; provided that he at the same time confess, that this perseverance depends on election alone. But Georgius, to shut out all idea of special or particular election, makes each individual among men the author of his *own* election.

The *third account* or cause why we are in error, according to our worthy friend Georgius is, because, though the Scripture does indeed make mention of men being "blinded" and "hardened;" yet we do not bear in mind, that such greater punishments are inflicted on sins of greater magnitude.—We, however, on our part, do not deny that which is clearly confirmed by numberless testimonies of the Scripture;—that God punishes with blindness, and with many other modes of judgment, contempt of his grace, pride, obstinacy, and many other kindred sins. And indeed, all those conspicuous punishments, of which mention is made throughout the Scriptures, ought to be referred to that general view of the righteous judgment of God, in the display of which we ever see, that those who have not duly feared God, after they had known Him, nor have reverenced Him as they ought, have been "given over to a reprobate mind," and left to wallow in every kind of uncleanness and lust. But, on this deep subject, we shall dwell more fully hereafter.

Although, therefore, the Lord doth thus strike the wicked with vindictive madness and consternation, and doth thus repay them with the punishment they deserve: yet this does not at all alter the fact, that there is, in all the reprobate, generally, a blindness and an obstinate hardness of heart. So, when Pharaoh is said to have been "hardened" of God, he was already, in himself, worthy of being delivered over unto Satan by the Most High. Moses however also testifies, that Pharaoh had

been before blinded of God "for this very purpose." (Exod. ix. 16.) Nor does Paul add any other cause for this, than that Pharaoh was one of the reprobate. (Rom. ix. 17.) In this same manner also does the apostle demonstrate, that the Jews, when God had deprived them of the light of understanding, and had permitted them to fall into horrible darkness, suffered thereby the righteous punishments of their wicked contempt of the grace of God. And yet the apostle plainly intimates, that this same blindness is justly inflicted of God upon all reprobates, generally. For he testifies, that the "remnant" were saved "according to the election of grace:" but that all "the rest were blinded." If then, all "the rest," in the salvation of whom the election of God does not reign, are "blinded," it is doubtlessly and undeniably manifest, that those same persons who, by their rebellion and provocation of the wrath of God, procured to themselves this additional blindness, were themselves from the beginning ordained to blindness. Hence, the words of Paul are manifestly true, where he says, that the vessels of wrath were "afore prepared unto destruction;" namely all those, who, being destitute of the Spirit of adoption, precipitated themselves into eternal destruction by their own sin and fault. Wherefore, I hesitate not to confess, that in the secret judgments of God, something always precedes; but, "hidden." For *how* God condemns the wicked and yet justifies the wicked, is a mystery that is shut up in that secret mind of God, which is inaccessible to all human understanding. Wherefore, there remains nothing better, nothing more becoming *us*, than to stand in awe with the apostle, and exclaim "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33.) For God's judgments are a profound abyss.

Georgius then goes on to say, 'that no one syllable can be found, in the whole Scripture, from which it can be lawfully concluded, that those who were reprobated by the eternal judgment of God, were "blinded;" and that

all which we testify concerning predestination rests on the mere craft of philosophic invention; for that God could not be ignorant of any of those things which *should* come to pass; and that whatsoever things He did foresee, could not but come to pass *according* to that *foreknowledge.*'—To this lying misrepresentation of our doctrine I give no answer. My books are its standing refutation. The fact is, that as the unbounded favour of the reverend abbot gave this conceited fellow the license of saying what he pleased, among his silly brethren; and as he had the audacity to puff off, among them all, the dreams that entered his brain, as the oracles of God, he really promised himself the same credit outside the monastery. But what is the benefit of my now using many words to prove that, which I have proved a thousand times over?—that we do not gather that *difference* between the elect and the reprobate, (against which Georgius so violently but vainly wars,) from the *bare foreknowledge* of God, (according to this fellow's stupid perversion of our testimony); but that we prove it to be taught in numberless manifest and solid passages of the Holy Scripture. And yet, this fellow imagines, and would make it appear, that we war with the *prescience* of God, *alone.* Readers, however, will find above twenty plain passages already cited by me, which prove the contrary to this vain imagination. He boasts that special and particular election is a fiction of our own: for that God chooses no special or particular persons. Christ himself, however, declares aloud, on the contrary, 'that He *knows* whom He has *chosen.*' (John xiii. 18.)

Behold then, readers, with what mighty war-engines of his own fabrication, Georgius labours to shake that eternal counsel of God, by which some are chosen to salvation and others ordained unto destruction!—Paul does indeed make the righteousness of God *common to all,* by faith: nor does he admit any distinction whatever: testifying, that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."—I also confess with my whole heart,

according to Paul, that the righteousness of God is freely extended to all, through faith. But whence cometh faith unto men? Only from the free illumination of the Spirit. And whom does Paul consider to be those who believe in Christ? Those only whom his heavenly Father has *drawn*. And most certainly Christ on his part reckons no one among *his own* but him who was given to Him by his Father. He accordingly declares that those who were given to Him were, before, his Father's. Georgius we well know will here thrust in our faces his mad dream about *natural* faith: which absurdity it does not belong to my present purpose to stop to refute. I shall only say that the righteousness of God is "unto all and upon all them that believe" in Christ. But on the testimony of the same apostle, I assert, that where one believeth and another doth not believe, it is God alone that makes the difference; that it is of God alone that some have the advantage of others in obtaining the blessing; that no one might glory. I affirm, that in order that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God, our eternal inheritance is sealed upon our hearts, by the earnest and seal of the Spirit. I also affirm, that our ability to believe in Christ is given to us of God. I moreover maintain, that "the eyes of our understanding are enlightened" of God that we might know "what is the hope of his calling." And finally I testify, that faith is a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Paul does indeed declare, that "there is no difference." But his meaning is, that there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for that God invites both, equally, unto salvation. Now Georgius here affirms, that these two races of men comprehend all mankind. Be it so. He cannot by that argument prove, that righteousness is promised, severally and separately, to each individual of mankind. And suppose we were to grant this last point, we must come after all to the original proposition and fact,—that no one can become a partaker of the good

offered him, but by faith. By this argument, then, the monk must be driven to the necessity of making faith common to all men. And this, as we have before abundantly proved, is directly contrary to the mind of the Apostle Paul. Our monk will follow up his argument, by saying, that according to our doctrine, the elect alone have "come short of the glory of God." And how does he arrive at this conclusion? Because (says he) the grace of Christ is poured out on all who have sinned. But *I so* hold the grace of God to be universal, as to make the great difference consist in this;—that *all* are not called "according to God's purpose."

Georgius imagines himself to argue very cleverly, when he says, "Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Therefore those who would exclude the reprobate from a participation in the benefits of Christ, must, of necessity, place them somewhere out of the world."—Now we will not permit the common solution of this question to avail, on the present occasion; which would have it, that Christ suffered *sufficiently* for all men; but *effectually* for his elect alone. This great absurdity, by which our monk has procured for himself so much applause amongst his own fraternity, has no weight whatever with me.—John does indeed extend the benefits of the atonement of Christ, which was completed by his death, to all the elect of God, *throughout* what climes of the world soever they may be scattered. But though the case be so, it by no means alters the fact, that the reprobate are mingled with the elect *in* the world. It is also a fact, without controversy, that Christ came to atone for the sins "of the whole world." But the solution of all difficulty is immediately at hand, in the truth and fact, that it is "whosoever believeth in him" that "shall not perish, but shall have eternal life." For, our present question is, not what the power or virtue of Christ *is*, nor what *efficacy it has in itself;* but, *who those are*, to whom He gives himself to be enjoyed.—Now if the possession of

Christ stands in faith: and if faith flows from the Spirit of adoption: it follows, that he alone is numbered of God among his children, who is designed of God to be a partaker of Christ! Indeed, the Evangelist John sets forth the office of Christ to be none other than that of "gathering together all the children of God" in one, by his death. From all which we conclude, that although reconciliation is offered unto all men, through Him; yet, that the great benefit belongs peculiarly to the elect; that *they* might be "gathered together," and be made "together" partakers of eternal life.

Be it observed, however, that when I speak of reconciliation through Christ being offered *to all;* I do not mean that that message or embassy, by which Paul says God "reconciles the world unto himself," really comes, or reaches, unto all men; but that it is not sealed indiscriminately on the hearts of *all* those to whom it does come; so as to be effectual in them. And as to our present opponent's prating about there being "no acceptance of persons with God," he must first "go and learn" what the word "person," meaneth, agreeably to our preceding explanations of it; and then, we shall have no more trouble with him, on that score.

"But Paul teaches us (continues Georgius) that God 'would have all men to be saved.'" It follows, therefore, according to his understanding of that passage, either that God is disappointed in his wishes, or, that all men, without exception, must be saved. If he should reply, that God *wills* all men to be saved, on his part, or as far as He is concerned; seeing that salvation is, nevertheless, left to the free will of each individual;—I, in return, ask him, *why*, if such be the case, God did not command the Gospel to be preached to all men, indiscriminately, from the beginning of the world?—*why* He suffered so many generations of men to wander, for so many ages, in all the darkness of death? Now it follows, in the apostle's context, that God "would have all men come to the

knowledge of the truth." But the sense of the whole passage is perfectly plain, and contains no ambiguity, to any reader of candour, and of a sound judgment. We have fully explained the whole passage, in former pages. The apostle had just before exhorted, that solemn and general prayers should be offered up in the Church, "for kings and princes," &c., that no one might have cause to deplore those kings and magistrates, whom God might be pleased to set over them: because, at that time, rulers were the most violent enemies of the faith. Paul, therefore, makes Divine provision for this state of things, by the prayers of the Church; and by affirming, that the grace of Christ could reach to this order of men also; even to kings, princes, and rulers of every description.

But it is no matter of wonder, that the more audacity this worthless fellow betrays, in wresting the Scriptures, the more profuse he should be in heaping passages on passages to suit his purpose: seeing that he does not possess one particle of religion or of shame, which might restrain his headlong impudence. But the more diffuse he is in his wild discussions, the more brief I shall study to be in my answers, by which I hope to curb his pretensions. He cites that passage of Isaiah lvi. 3, "Neither let the son of the stranger speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people." And he takes it for granted, that *that* text can never be applied to the reprobate. For he judges it absurd to suppose that the elect are ever called "the sons of the stranger."—To this I reply, that it is by no means unusual to find, in the Scripture, those who were elected before the foundation of the world, considered, nevertheless, "strangers," or "the sons of the stranger," until they are gathered into the family, and among the children of God, by faith. The words of Peter, borrowed from the prophet Isaiah are, "Which in time past were not a people; but now are the people of God." (1 Pet. ii. 10.) Now to whom is Peter here speaking? Is it not to those, of whom he had testified

in the beginning of the epistle, that they were "elect according to the foreknowledge of God?" Paul sets this matter forth in a still more open light, in his Epistle to the Ephesians. After he had therein dwelt very largely on their eternal election of God, he subsequently reminds them, that, "At that time they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Ephes. ii. 12.) And is it any cause of wonder, if Isaiah, building thus, under the inspiration of the Spirit, the temple of God, out of profane stones, should declare that there would be a new consecration of it! For as the calling of the Gentiles lay hidden all along, in the heart of God, what else appeared in them, outwardly, than all damnable uncleanness! All those among them, who were at length incorporated in the spiritual body of Christ by faith, were, indeed, all that time, really the sheep of God; as Christ himself testifies, John x. 16. But they were sheep, as yet shut out of the fold, and "wandering upon the dark mountains." And though *they* themselves, all the while, knew it not, yet the Shepherd knew *them;* according to that eternal predestination, by which He chose *his own* unto himself, before the foundation of the world. Augustine sets this forth very soundly and beautifully.

"Now if that word of the prophet Ezekiel be true (continues Georgius) 'The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father;' no part of mankind are left in original sin."—But I really will have nothing to do with this unclean beast at all. (Deut. xiv. 7.) My purpose is to come to the help of the ignorant only; that they may not be taken and carried away with such worthless cavillings as these. No one thing is more certain, than that all those remain under the general destruction, who are not engrafted into the body of Christ. This good brother monk, prodigal of dealing with strangers, huddles all together, and presses into the household, even

those against whom God has shut and barred the door. But that man is wilfully mad, whoever he may be, who does not confess, that no one of those who died naturally in Adam, can be restored unto eternal life, in any other way than in that ordained of God. The manifest difference between the seed of a believing, and that of an unbelieving man, as determined by the apostle is this—that the former is "holy," but the latter "unclean." And, on this sacred principle, before the Gentiles were ingrafted into the Church with the Jews, by the breaking down of "the middle wall of partition between them;" the apostle calls the branches of Abraham "holy," from their holy root. But what need is there of a lengthened discussion of this point? Did not the same prophet Ezekiel, whose word this monk so abuses, frequently condemn the uncircumcised Gentiles to destruction, as profane persons? Nor would circumcision be the covenant of life, even now, on any other grounds. How then can it be true to assert, that the son shall *not* bear the punishment of the sin of the father? And, on the other hand, I ask, How shall that man boast himself to be innocent, who is born an unclean raven, from an unclean egg? For original sin is *so* derived from Adam universally, that it becomes the peculiar property of the nature of every man. No one therefore can justly complain; under an imagination that he is bearing the guilt of another's sin, and considering himself free from fault. But if it is not lawful for God to punish, in their children, the sins of their fathers, what is the meaning of that word, "Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation" (Exod. xx. 5)?—And again, "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation?" (Exod. xxxiv. 17.) Moreover, the first part of this visiting vengeance is, that the non-elect children of Adam, being left destitute of the Spirit of God, remain sunk in the original sin of their nature.

When Georgius argues thus;—"John says he that sinneth, I will blot his name out of the book of life,—if you explain this applying to the reprobate; they never were written in the book of life. If you interpret it as referring to the elect, the eternal counsel of God will be mutable and fail."—Now, our monk prates in this way, as if God did not always address us in a manner adapted to our comprehension, as men. How base a specimen of ingratitude! thus to insult God, for having, through the greatest indulgence towards us, and our limited comprehension, expressed himself in such simple terms. If this worthless fellow goes on with his interpretation of the Scriptures, at this rate, according to the letter, he will by-and-bye fabricate for us a corporeal God; assigning as his reason, *because* the Scripture speaks of God as having ears, eyes, feet, and hands. The meaning, of the passage, however, is most simple and plain;—that those are "blotted out of the book of life," who, having been considered, for a time, the children of God, as being among them, afterwards draw back and fall away into their own place; as Peter most truly describes Judas to have done. Such characters, however, (as John testifies) "were never of us; for if they had been of us they would not have gone out from us." (1 John ii. 19.) That, however, which John expresses thus summarily, the prophet Ezekiel sets forth essentially and circumstantially; "They shall not be in the secret assembly of my people; neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel." The same key also will unlock the difficulty that may appear, in the cases where Moses and Paul express their willingness "to be blotted out of the book of life." The fact is, that they were so carried out of themselves, as it were, by the excess of their grief, that they uttered their readiness rather to perish, than that the Church of God, populous as it then was, should be extinguished. When, however, Christ bids his disciples "rejoice because their names were written in heaven," He speaks of that as

an everlasting blessing, of which they never should be deprived. In a word, Christ unites and harmonizes both meanings, concerning names being written in the book of life, when He says, "Every tree that my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Whereby He plainly intimates, that the reprobate also sometimes take root, in appearance, and yet, are not planted by the hand of God.

On that comparison of the apostle Paul (Rom. v. 12), where he says, "As by one man sin came into the world unto condemnation; so by one man came the gift of righteousness unto life," Georgius argues thus;—"If, therefore, many died through one; much more must the grace of God abound, that many may reign in life, by Christ." —Now if the apostle were here proving that the grace of Christ extended unto all men; acknowledging myself vanquished, I would be silent, and say no more on the subject. But as the apostle's purpose is simply to show, how much more powerful the grace of Christ is, in the faithful, than the curse which they derived from Adam; what is there, in this blessed truth, to shake the eternal election of those whom Christ has restored, from the ruins of the fall, to the possession and enjoyment of everlasting life; leaving the rest to perish in their sins?—But our monk wishes to dwell on the particular *expressions* of the apostle. "Paul (he says) comprehends the whole race of mankind when he uses the terms, 'the sin of *one man*' and 'came upon *all men*.' Therefore, no one can be lawfully excluded from the participation of eternal life."—But if we are allowed to reason at this rate, I should be inclined to contend, that if it be so, God must needs, and as a natural consequence, create some new worlds, that in *them* things might be managed better than in *this!* Christ declares that the curse, in Adam, by no means equalled the grace, in himself; because, as his apostle saith, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Now if the numbers of the sons of men (of the elect, and the repro-

bate; of those under the curse, and those under grace) be reduced into one; Christ could not, certainly, save more than Adam destroyed; namely, more than these two numbers of men. Therefore, the faith of Paul must be altogether imperilled, in his own election and salvation; unless some new world should immediately rise out of the sea! I will use, however, in the defence of the truth, no other shield than that which our monk himself fits on my arm, by another passage of Paul, which he boastingly adduces, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—If this worthless opponent of the truth applies the second member of this text to all the sons of Adam, Paul immediately holds up his hand to stop him. For he plainly testifies, directly afterwards, that he is therein speaking of the members of Christ, only. "Christ (saith he), the first fruits; afterwards, they that are Christ's, at his coming." Now Paul is here undeniably speaking of the resurrection; which shall be followed by a blessed immortality;—that immortality, in which, in our creed, we confess our faith, when we utter, "I believe in—the life everlasting!"

That I may not, however, wear out my readers, to no purpose, by taking up the absurd arguments of this worthless person one after the other; my purpose now shall be to lay hold of a few more, out of the many that still remain unnoticed.—In what sense we are to understand, that God willeth not the death of a sinner, but that all should turn and live, I have explained, at length, in former pages. For when God exhorts men to repentance, and offers life to them upon their return; *that* exhortation and offer are common to all men. But, with respect to his own children, God makes *them* worthy of the inestimable privilege of his taking out of them their "stony hearts," and giving them "hearts of flesh."—Nor do I by any means concede to the monk that all those words of the Lord are spoken in vain, and into the air, by which He leaves all the wicked, who are convicted of their

malice against him, without excuse; while He so works in his elect, that the *doctrine* of his truth becomes *effectual in their hearts*, by the secret power of his Spirit, while the Word *sounds in their ears*. Nor is there the least reason why that common slander should distress the mind of any one; which profanely intimates, "that God merely mocks men, by exhorting them to walk, when He knows that they are disabled in their feet." For surely God doth men no injury whatever, when He demands nothing more of them than that which they really owe Him: unless indeed the debtor, who has nothing to pay, may boast before his creditor, that he has paid him all: and that, too, while the creditor laughs at his boasts, with astonishment! But I will pursue this part of the serious battle no farther. The truth involved cannot be destroyed, without the destruction of every man's conscience also.

God commands the ears of his people Israel to be stricken by, and filled with, the voice of his prophet.—For what end? That their hearts might be touched? Nay; but that they might be hardened!—That those who hear might repent?—Nay; but that, being already lost, they might doubly perish! If thou reply, O monk, that the *cause* was mightier; and so ruled over all the *consequences*; this confession is all I wish to be granted me, in the present instance. Hence, it is by no means absurd, that the doctrine of the truth should, as commanded of God, be spread abroad; though He knows that, in multitudes, it will be without its saving effects. Nor less frivolous is the cavil, when the monk declares, that *that* Word of Christ cannot be made to stand consistently with the doctrine of election, where he is speaking of the "sheep" that was "brought back," after it had been "lost." I am satisfied however that I can, with much more propriety and effect, hurl back at the monk the javelin which he launches at me. The very reason why Christ represents that it was a *sheep* that was thus "brought back" after having been "lost," for a time, was, because, being a *sheep*, in reference to its free and eternal election

of God, it was safe, all the while it was lost, under the protection of the Eternal Shepherd!

Of the same trash is that logical *dilemma*, which he introduces, and by which he hopes to bewilder us all.—" If (argues he) there were such a thing as special election, the exhortation of the prophet could not possibly be made consistent with it, where he says, ' Let the wicked forsake his way.' For if that exhortation be addressed to the elect;—how can those be ' wicked ' in whom ' all things work together for good?' If it be addressed to the reprobate;—how can the reprobate be exhorted to repentance " ?—My reply is, that the exhortation of the prophet is addressed both to the elect, and to the reprobate;—to the former, that those among them who have, for a time, shaken off the yoke, and have wantonly gone out of the way, might, by being thus warned, return to a right mind;—to the latter, that lying stupified in their iniquities, they might, by such piercing appeals, be goaded into a sense of their awful condition. For we never imagine to ourselves, nor falsely picture to others, that the elect always hold on the right course, under the constant direction of the Holy Spirit; on the contrary, we ever affirm, that they slip with their feet, wander out of the way, and dash against various rocks of sin and of error, and frequently, are quite out of the right way of salvation. But as the protection of God, by which they are governed and defended, is stronger than all things, it is impossible that they should fall into *utter ruin*.—" Men (continues the monk) are commanded to take heed lest they perish. But it is all the while certain, that the elect are placed beyond all danger. And to the reprobate all heed or caution must be vain."—To this argument also, I reply, There is nothing strange in this sacred matter at all. The elect, who are engaged in a perpetual conflict, require to be thus furnished with armour, necessary for the battle. Moreover, the diligence of all men, generally, is stimulated by such exhortations. While the reprobate, by disregarding all exhortation, prove themselves at

length to be incurable. For medicine is sedulously administered, in diseases, until despair of all cure makes its irremediable appearance.

Another objection urged by Georgius is, 'that Abraham is not called the father of the *elect*, but the father of the *faithful*; and that salvation is not promised to the elect, but the believing.'—Whom then will he make those to be, who are to be gathered together, with their father Abraham, into the kingdom of heaven? For Christ most certainly declares, that this great blessing belongs to the elect alone. Nay, Christ also declares, that a limit shall be put to the horrible coming destructions, "*for the elect's sake!*" What! Shall we deny that those are the children of Abraham who, together with Him, are made the members of God's household, the Church? And how was it, I pray you, that so great an honour was conferred on Abraham, as that he was called the father of the faithful; unless it was because he was chosen of God? And how is it, that those are accounted degenerate children of his, who do not duly represent their believing father, by their faith?

In fact, the audacity of this worthless renegade is perfectly execrable. He labours with all his might, in all his arguments, to deface, blot out, and do away with, that very mark by which God, more especially than by any other, designates and distinguishes his people.—I confess, without any hesitation, that eternal life is promised "to them that believe:" provided, however, that the monk deny not, on his part, that eternal life is in like manner promised to the elect: for thus saith Isaiah, "And mine elect shall possess it." (Isaiah v. 9.) I shall demand also of my opponent, that he confess, that *those only* believe, whom God enlightens by his Spirit; and that he confess, moreover, that election is the mother of faith. Paul testifies that he is ready "to endure all things for the elect's sake." (2 Tim. ii. 10.) And Christ proclaims aloud that God the Father "is the avenger" of all the elect.

(Luke xviii. 7.) Paul moreover exhorts the Colossians, that they 'put on, as the elect of God, and as the holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering,' &c. (Col. iii. 12.) In another place, the apostle declares the elect to be free from every charge of sin or guilt. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" (Rom. viii. 33.)—Are then believers to be robbed of all these blessings? This would be making a worse than hostile separation of those things, which God hath mutually, and indeed inseparably, joined together. Nay, "that the election of God might stand," those who were once blind, are "illuminated" unto faith. By that faith they receive the righteousness of Christ: and by that faith they are "kept" and "persevere unto the end."

Georgius farther argues,—'When the Scripture denounces destruction on them that are lost, it by no means refers or attributes the *cause* of that destruction to the eternal counsel of God: but declares, that it rests with the lost themselves.'—We, however, never *so* represent the reprobate to be left destitute of the Spirit of God, in his appeals to their resisting consciences, *as* to charge the fault of their iniquities on God. What sins soever men commit, let them charge all the fault on themselves alone. And if any man should *attempt* to escape the fault or guilt of his sin; I affirm, that such an one would find himself bound too securely by the chains of his own conscience, ever to free himself from righteous condemnation, for his transgressions.—Let Adam excuse himself as long as he will; by saying, that he was deceived by the enticements of the wife, which God gave him. Within himself, nevertheless, will be found, the deadly poison of infidelity: within himself will be found that worst of all counsellors, depraved ambition: within himself will be found the flaming torch of a devilish defiance of God! Far less excusable, therefore, shall *they* be, who attempt to force, out of the profound secrets of the eternal counsel of God, *that cause* of their iniquities; which is ever putting

forth its awful head from the deep corruption of their own hearts. Richly do *they* deserve to be 'given over to a reprobate mind,' who have not glorified God, as they ought, even as far as He may be known, by the contemplation of 'his works that are seen;'—the heavens and the earth. Those who wilfully, deliberately, and maliciously reject the grace of Christ, and turn their backs upon the burning and shining light of the Gospel, deserve still heavier punishment. Wherefore, let each one acknowledge his own sins, and condemn himself alone; and, confessing from his heart, all the fault to be his own, let him supplicate the mercy of his Judge.

If any reprobate one should cavil, and be inclined to make a noise; the Scripture furnishes a ready and silencing reply, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed *thyself!*" (Hos. xiii. 9.) For, as we have observed, towards our commencement, if the complaint of Medea of old, in the classic poet, is utterly ridiculous, when she laments that the trees were ever cut down from Mount Pelion, to furnish wood for building the ship Argo; when the fact was, that the flame of love, burning out of her own lustful heart, was the *real cause* of her destroying her father and her whole kingdom, together with herself; much less, most certainly, are *their* arguments to be listened to, who would fetch from afar, even from the clouds themselves, *remote causes* of their sin and fault; when the sight of it is ever before their eyes; issuing forth continually from the deep-seated fountain of their own hearts; the evidences of which are plain and perpetual, how much soever they may strive to hide them. The Scripture therefore assigns the *cause* of all evils to the *natural sins* of men!

Indeed, the great question between me and the monk, is not,—whether men yield necessary obedience to the secret judgment of God, or are inevitably carried on in their sin by it, without any fault of their own; which we not only declare to be a false tenet, but a foul and detestable profanity; but the question between us is, whether the

wicked, who by their voluntary sins provoke the wrath of God against themselves, were *afore* reprobated of God (as the righteous but incomprehensible *cause* of all,) "according to the counsel of his own will."—Now, as Paul severely condemns the sins of men; powerfully pressing them home upon their own conscience; and determinately vindicating, at the same time, the justice of God, from the profane slanders of men; so he openly declares, and dissembles not, that those who precipitate themselves into destruction, by their sins, are "vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction."—Christ also charges home their guilt on the reprobate, as they deserve. But He at the same time shows, that the great *cause* of all was, that they were 'trees, *not planted* by the hand of *his Father*.' In a word, we are told that the Father gave unto the Son, those that were *his*, that He might sanctify them. In the opposite view, Paul, having shewn that "the elect obtained it," (namely, "the righteousness of faith"), adds, that all "the rest were blinded." Vain, therefore, are all the arguments of Georgius; who, fixing his eyes on the open sins of men only, never thinks of that hidden source of all the wickedness of mankind, the *corruption of nature!*

The monk considers that we are implicated in a great absurdity, *because* we make the will of man *free* to sin, when the reprobate certainly sin *of necessity*. But that freedom of will in man of which we speak, and with which our monk is so familiarly acquainted, is, after all, quite unknown to him. Now Paul calls some "free," who are "*free* from righteousness;" namely, those who, destitute of the fear of God, and of all temperance, revel in iniquity. Does it follow, then, that such are not "the servants of sin?"—Our monk condemns us also for limiting and binding the power of God. "For (says he) if God foreknows and ordains all things that shall come to pass, he has not power to change them afterwards." A prodigious wonder this truly!—that God is not like a mortal man; who is ever flexible and variable, and changes his mind

and purposes, every hour!—Why! the very thing against which the monk so violently fights is, that the adorable God is ever of one mind, and consistent with himself! Hence, his great hallucination is, that by separating the fixed decrees of God from his power, he makes him to be divided against himself. If we were to speak as the Stoics, we should say, according to the noted sentiment of Seneca, 'that God is a necessity, in himself.' We, however, with greater reverence and sobriety, say, 'that God always wills the same thing: and that this is the very praise of his immutability.' Whatever He decrees, therefore, He effects; and this is in Divine consistency with his Omnipotence. And the *will* of God, being thus inseparably united with his *power*, constitutes an exalted harmony of his attributes, worthy that Divine Providence, by which all things in heaven and earth are governed.

As to this miserable being's vain display of heaping testimonies upon testimonies, of the Scripture, which have nothing to do with each other, and have often contrary meanings and applications; to all this, I pay not the least regard. But though I am willing to pass by his ignorance, I am anxious to put a rein upon his impudence; to prevent his causing any distress to the simple-minded. —After having shown, from one passage of the apostle Paul, that God "sends upon those that receive not the truth, strong delusion that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. ii. 10, 11); he brings forward, on the back of this, another passage of a reference quite diverse; where the apostle says, that the doctrine of the Gospel is "hid in them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.) I confess, indeed, that these blind ones are called "those that *believe not.*" But if unbelief is the *sole* cause of the blindness in these characters, what is the meaning of the words which immediately follow, "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts." We know that darkness rules

everywhere. But it is God alone, as we here see, that brings light out of darkness.

As Georgius moreover accuses us of cruelty; averring, that we block up the way of salvation against ourselves and many others also, while Christ himself most kindly invites Canaanitish women, and "lost sheep," and even, 'strange dogs;'—to all this, we reply, that we faithfully set forth, before all men, the doctrines of faith and repentance; to the end that all men (if God will) might be profited by Christ. When our Lord himself was intreated by the wife of Zebedee, that He would set one of her sons on his right hand, and the other on his left;—by way of restraining this foolish and untimely desire, our Lord declares that such a wish was unbecoming her present state and calling; and He at the same time intimates, by no means obscurely, that there is a place decreed of his heavenly Father for every one; which shall be revealed in its time. In this same manner also, that superstition of men, that dwells on future events and issues; (which rest with God alone;) and which superstition is so plainly revealed in the Scripture, ought ever to be exposed by us; and not indulged, by our keeping silence. For until the day of the revelation of *the issues* shall come, our duty is to do what God commandeth;—to exhort all men, without exception, to repentance and faith. For the doctrine and preaching of the Gospel belong to all men, and are for the benefit of all men: and for those ends are they committed unto us, to be openly declared by us; even until the reprobate shall, by their deplorable obstinacy, block up our way, and shut the door.

Finding himself compelled by our testimony to admit the doctrine of *predestination*, confirmed as it is by the multiplied testimony of so many passages of the Scripture, Georgius throws a new cavil into the field; than which nothing can be imagined more stupid or more putrid;—'that the believers of the New Testament are said to be "chosen" of God, as being those to whom God made known the

riches of the mystery, which had been hidden from ages.' To confirm this sense which he puts upon the subject, by his own silly invention, he collects together all those texts of the Scripture, which set forth the excellency of the grace revealed by Christ. And then, he arrives at the conclusion, that whatever is contained in the first chapter to the Ephesians, has no other intent, than to show, that God condescended to dignify the believers of the *New Testament*, by bestowing on them this peculiar treasure. And when pushed to state *the time* to which this grace refers; he says, that it was made common unto all men, without distinction, *from the coming* of Christ *to the end of the world.*

The words of Paul, however, show a very different boundary of this grace. The sum of Paul's testimony is, that those only are illuminated unto faith, who were predestinated unto eternal life, "according to the eternal good-pleasure of God." Nor can it be denied, that there was, at the first preaching of the Gospel, a special call of certain persons. Nor was the Gospel published to all. And suppose it be granted, that it did sound in the ears of all, as proclaimed by the *external voice;* yet Paul's testimony refers to a *far deeper call;* even to that call by which the Spirit of God penetrates into the hearts of men. When however we make this great distinction between the *outward* and the *internal* and *effectual* call; such a distinction is, to Georgius, all a dream! But whether the making of this difference be a trifling, or a grave matter, the experience of faith furnishes a rich *understanding.* Moreover, the apostle does not treat of election, in this chapter to the Ephesians, in any other sense, or with any other object, than he does elsewhere, as when (2 Thess. ii. 13,) he "gives thanks to God, because He had, from the beginning, chosen the Thessalonians to salvation." And Paul, be it remembered, is here separating a small company of believers, from the multitude of the wicked.

The monk will here reply, 'that lawless despisers of grace, when spoken of, are always set forth in opposition to the elect.' But this is nothing whatever to the purpose. For all I am contending for, in the present instance, is, that some are specially chosen of God, in preference to others. Whereas Georgius, on the other hand, continues to prate, that we are only predestinated to be born at a *certain time;* namely, *after the coming* of Christ; as he argues above. How stands the case then with the reprobate Judas? of whom, Christ declares, that he was not one of the elect, but "had a devil;" though he had heard the words of his Divine Master, and had enjoyed his domestic fellowship? But Christ immediately and distinctively adds, "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen." (John xiii. 18.)—If, however, we are to listen to this fanatical being, the condition of Herod, who was *since* Christ, was better than that of David who was *before* Christ. And, according to him, the impious scribes and pharisees will *precede* the holy prophets, in the *honour of election!* For He will say, that the latter, by reason of their age and time, were not in the number of elect believers. Nay, he everywhere clamours, that the grace of election belongs generally to a *certain age.* In a word, he offers himself as a guarantee, that the apostle has nowhere spoken of predestination, otherwise. What! Does the apostle include *all* the men of his *own age,* when he says, "Whom God did predestinate them He also called?" What! Does he not separate, from the general multitude of men, those of whom he speaks, as "being the called, according to his purpose?" Finally, when the apostle elsewhere says, "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise" (1 Cor. i. 27); does He, when making so evident a distinction, intend his words to apply to his *whole* generation?

But finding himself still entangled in the net of the truth, he seizes upon another way of escape.—'That *those* are not called the elect, whom God preferred above others;

but *those* who persevere in the common election and grace.' By which he means, that those are *at length* considered of God, the elect, who distinguish themselves from the common multitude of men, by the constancy of their faith. The passage of the apostle Paul, which he adduces to prove his doctrine, is this; "I charge thee before God, and the elect angels." Now what the monk requires to be granted to him, from this passage, is, that as the elect angels did not separate themselves and fall away with the apostate angels, they *procured for themselves*, by such high merit, the grace of election. But suppose we should assert, on the contrary, that it was *because* of their *being elect angels*, they stood fast,—how much more near the truth would be such an assertion!

When Christ predicts that the delusions of Satan shall be so great as even, if it were possible, to "deceive the very elect:" he implies the impossibility that Satan ever should carry away the elect, by any violence he may adopt. By what power, then, are we to suppose that the elect will be thus secure? Georgius dreams, *by their own strength!* Far different, however, is the positive declaration of Christ. 'No one (says He) shall pluck out of my hand those sheep, which my Father hath committed to my charge. My Father that gave them to me is greater than all: and no one can pluck them out of my Father's hand.' (John x. 20.) In the same manner, the apostle by no means commends believers to depend upon their own faithfulness: but on the contrary, he reminds them that "*God is faithful*, who hath called them: who also *will do it*." (1 Thess. v. 24.) The monk, however, makes each one the author and disposer of his *own* election. Whereas Christ positively declares, that those whom He hath chosen out of the world are *his own*. (John xv. 19.) In perfect harmony with which declaration of Christ, Paul asserts aloud, that "all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. viii. 28.)

And he asserts the same great truth, as loudly, concerning children not yet born: "that the purpose of God might stand; not of works, but of Him that calleth. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Romans ix. 11, 12, 13.) To what necessity then is the monk here driven? Why, this worthless being will positively have to prove, according to his own doctrine, that Jacob, even while yet enclosed in the womb of his mother, procured *for himself*, by his *own industry*, the honour of his *own* election; and that he stood in the possession of it, by his own faithfulness, unto the end.

Just the same amount of common reason and common sense is there in the monk's dispute, 'that the casting off, concerning which Paul speaks, did not refer to single persons, but to the whole body of the Jewish people.' For his exposition of the passage is, that the nation of the Jews, by rejecting Christ, deprived themselves of the inheritance of eternal life. Now I am free to confess, that on this *one point* has been founded the *cause* of all dispute, upon the mighty subject now in question. But no one of a sound mind will conclude, or suppose, that the whole great question is bounded by these narrow limits. For, in the first place, the apostle Paul plainly teaches, that the generation of Abraham consisted both of elect and reprobate individuals, promiscuously mingled together. And in the next place, the same apostle declares, generally, that from the mixed multitude of the human race are produced, by birth, as distinctive classes, the "vessels of wrath" and the "vessels of mercy," for the manifestation of the glory of God.

Paul does, indeed, make the first *proximate* cause of the reprobation of Israel to be, their not having believed the Gospel. That this cause is plainly set forth by the apostles, I by no means deny. But he first clearly lays down, be it remembered, the great doctrine concerning the secret judgments of God. Two things are distinctly dwelt on by the apostle. *First*, that God was never so

bound to one people, as to prevent his free election from reigning in the *choice* or *reprobation* of *certain individuals!* And *secondly*, that the Jews, by their ingratitude, shut themselves out from the family of God; when they were the peculiar heirs of the covenant of eternal life. But lest the *appearance* of change, in the purposes of God, should disturb the mind of any one, by this *later* rejection of the Jews *seeming* to shake the secret counsel of God; the apostle guards against such a consequence, by the appropriate declaration, that "the gifts and callings of God are *without repentance*" (Rom. xi. 29), and that, therefore, "the remnant according to the election of grace" should be saved. (Rom. xi. 5.) By which words, the apostle means, that the election of God, which stands in his secret counsel, remains firm and immoveable.

But the impudence of this worthless mortal discovers itself more basely still, in his declaring, that Esau was not reprobated *before he sold* his birthright. I willingly acknowledge the testimony of the apostle, where he says, that *after* Esau had deprived himself of his inheritance, he was rejected. (Heb. xii. 17.) But are we to suppose, that his rejection by *his father* Isaac, which he was then suffering, entirely did away with that former *judgment* and *purpose* of God, which was the *original cause* of his reprobation? Most certainly not. No more than the *faith* and *obedience* of *Jacob* did away with *his* free and eternal *adoption* of God!

The observation with which I opened this discussion, I now repeat, at its close;—that no one will ever *attempt* to disprove the doctrine which I have set forth herein, but he who may imagine himself to be wiser than the Spirit of God. Now-a-days, however, the soured opposition of men has attained to such a height, that they will not willingly and quietly receive even that, which is evidently taken from the Scripture itself, without arrogating to themselves the prerogative of God; by imposing

on others *the law* of speech and of silence. And yet, some of these insolent ones wish to conceal their real principles, under the garb of *modesty;* professing that, for themselves, they would not dare to deny that which had been testified by all the servants of God. For my part, I soberly and reverently profess, that I know no other law of modesty, than that which I have learnt in the school of my heavenly Master! I am however fully aware, that all possible prudence should be adopted, in tempering all things to the building up of men in the most holy faith. But as I have studied to do that throughout my ministry, and in the present TREATISE also, with faith and a good conscience;—if the nice objections of some are not yet satisfied; I feel, for myself, that I have done my duty.—"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!"

A BRIEF REPLY,

INTENDED TO REFUTE THE CALUMNIES

OF

A CERTAIN WORTHLESS PERSON,

BY WHICH HE ENDEAVOURED TO POLLUTE THE DOCTRINE OF

THE ETERNAL PREDESTINATION OF GOD.

BY JOHN CALVIN.

A BRIEF REPLY,

ETC.

THERE has been cast in my way the silly script of a certain worthless mortal, who, with all his vileness, boasts of being a defender and avenger of the glory of God by waging war against the *Divine principle*, and doctrine,—'that the world is so governed by God, that nothing is done therein but by his *secret counsel* and *decree*.'

Meanwhile, this miserable being, sees not, that when he is catching at fallacious pretences of clearing the *justice* of God from imputation, he is all the while utterly subverting his *power*: all which is, as it were, attempting to rend in pieces God himself. But to give a colour to his profanity; he prefaces his undertaking, not less wickedly than maliciously, with the remark,—'that God is not the *cause* of evil, nor *wills* sin.' As if, when we claim for God the supremacy of all rule, we assert, that He is the author of sin!

Now it is evident, that JOHN CALVIN is attacked by this sentence. But it is well known, that JOHN CALVIN is too far removed from the blasphemy, with which this worthless being would charge him, to need any lengthened protection of himself, from its malignity.

JOHN CALVIN constantly declares aloud, throughout his writings, wherever sin is the subject of discussion, that the name of God is not to be mingled or mentioned with sin: because, nothing is consistent with the character of God, but rectitude and equity. How foul, then, is the calumny, to involve a man, so long deserving well of the Church of God, in the crime of making God the author of sin!

The OBJECT of this malicious calumny does indeed affirm, throughout his publications, that nothing is done but by the WILL OF GOD! But he at the same time asserts, that those things which are done *wickedly* by men, are so overruled by the secret counsel of God, that *that counsel* hath no connexion whatever with the *sinfulness* of men.

The sum of the doctrine of the thus reviled one is, that God, in wondrous ways, and in ways unknown to us, directs all things to the end that He *wills;* that his eternal WILL might be the FIRST CAUSE of all things. But *why* God wills that which may *seem* to us inconsistent with his nature, the reviled one confesses to be incomprehensible! And therefore, he declares aloud, that the *why?* of God's works, is not to be audaciously or curiously pried into: but that, on the contrary, as the counsels of God are a mighty deep, and mysteries that surpass the limits of our comprehension, it becomes man rather to adore them with reverence, than to investigate them with presumption.

Meantime, the object of all this foul calumny maintains, as a *sacred principle*, that, although the *reason why* of the counsels of God lies hidden and unknown; nevertheless, the high praise of his *justice* is ever to be given to God; because HIS WILL is, and must be, the highest rule of all equity! Wherefore, let him, whosoever he may be, who desires to load the man that constantly teaches these things, with so atrocious a charge, as the making God the author of sin, first take upon himself the task of proving, that

when those wicked men, who, by crucifying Christ, did "that which the hand of God, and his counsel, before determined to be done," made God a partaker of their wickedness; and involved Him in a share of their guilt! The words "that which thy hand, and thy counsel before determined to be done," are not the words of CALVIN (let it be remembered); but of the Holy Spirit and of Peter, and of the whole Primitive Church. (Acts iv. 28.)

Let these unreasonable and extravagant men, then, cease to defile the pure and lucid doctrine of the Holy Spirit, with their pollution and their filth, and thus to blind the eyes of the simple; that when the inexperienced, who understand not the real nature of the question, may not, when they hear sin mentioned, dash against the awful and abhorrent rock of making God the author of sin!—After David had complained that he was oppressed by the unjust violence of his enemies on every side; he fails not to add, "that God had done all this!" When Job was despoiled of his substance by plunderers, and tormented by the devil, he likewise confesses that all these evils came upon him, from God! If any one should reply, 'That in this manner God is made the author of sin;' let him wage his war with the holy prophets of God, and with the Holy Spirit himself. But while the holy prophets, and the witnesses of the Holy Spirit, held fast the sacred *distinction*, that, though all things were thus done as *ordained* of God, and yet, that whatsoever God wills or decrees, is righteous and just; they, with equal plainness and firmness, set HIM high above all, who rules, with his secret and sovereign rein, Satan himself, and all the wicked.

This short reply, thus far made, had JOHN CALVIN said no more, might have been sufficient to refute the iniquitous calumny of this worthless being; who so purposely and perversely corrupts and deforms his sentiments and doctrine.—But that this calumniator's *ends* and *aims* may be the more completely uncovered, neither the time nor pains will be lost, perhaps, if we look into some other rising

volumes of his malicious smoke.—Now as this vain being's purpose is to deprive God of his supreme rule and government; and as, with all the impudence imaginable, he cuts down, at one stroke, the *principle*, that *the purpose of God is the first cause* of all things; I will summarily lay hold of, and examine, some of the *intermediate causes* and *reasons* which he brings forward.

This abandoned mortal asserts, that Plato's opinions were far above mine; because he does not suffer God to be called the author of sin. Whereas, this mortal knows not, really, what Plato either thinks or says. And so abhorrent is the very term, *evil*, to this profane scribbler, that he positively denies, that those numberless "evils," of which we are all the subjects, proceed from God. This is nothing more or less than despoiling God, at once, of his office as the JUDGE of the world!—But when Calvin, and before him Luther, and Bucer, and antecedently to them, Augustine, and other godly teachers, testify, that the *will* of God is the supreme *cause* of all things that are in the world; it was the farthest possible from the mind of each of them, and of them all, to entangle God in any shadow of fault. And as to Calvin, he, in all his writings, repudiates with fervid zeal, and pronounces to be detestable, that *idea* of the absolute, or tyrannical, power of God, which philosophizing theologians set afloat throughout their schools. And for this reason; because the *power* of God ought not and cannot be separated from his eternal *wisdom!* By this testimony, the impudent barking of this unclean dog is at once refuted, when he makes honest and faithful teachers in the Church of Christ to utter things that are blasphemous, abhorrent, and before unheard; and which, after all, are, with a futility equal to their malignity, brought out from the wicked work-shop of his own brain!

After vomiting forth all this foul calumny, this impure being professes to *prove*, that God is not the *cause* of *evils;—first* from the law of nature, and *next* from the authority of the *divine* Plato; as he terms him; by whom

(he says) God is called the *cause* of *good*. The solution of the whole matter is perfectly simple.—The image of that rectitude which we confess to be in God, is stamped upon all natural knowledge of good and evil. In proportion, therefore, as each one forms his life according to the law of nature; in so far, he represents the nature of God. For righteousness is a delight to God, in the same proportion as iniquity is an abomination to Him. But *how* He rules and overrules, by his secret counsel, all those things that are done wickedly by man, it is not ours to define. But *it is* ours to be assured and to declare, that in whatsoever God doeth, He never deviates from his own perfect *justice!*

I make the same reply to this worthless being's *second* argument. This noble champion for God puts the following question:—If God be the author of sin (as he affirms that we say); why does He at all prevent sin from being committed? why does He not throw the rein upon the necks of men altogether?—Now what means the barking of this dog, about God being made the author of sin? The fact is, that this fellow fabricates monsters in his own imagination, that he might get the fame of fighting with them. What then, if I retort, but in quite a different manner, that question which may truly be put, in assertion of the omnipotence of God;—If God does not *will* to be done the things that are done; why does He not prevent their being done? why does He throw the rein on the necks of men to do them?—But from this mode of figurative repugnance and contradiction, we may at once elicit the substance of that which Augustine testifies.—"God, in a secret and marvellous way, *justly wills*, the things which men *unjustly do*. Although according to his will, as truly expressed in his law, He hates iniquity, and has pleasure only in rectitude. And from this fountain, flow all the *curses* which are appended to the law. For if iniquities did not displease Him, as being utterly contrary to his nature, he would neither denounce, nor exact punish-

ments." Wherefore, all that this worthless being has heaped together to vindicate God (as he thinks) from ignominy, is utterly superfluous and vain. And in fact, it is himself all the while, who throws over God the *idea* of ignominy, while he is anxiously labouring, in a doubtful case (as he thinks), to make God appear to be *good.*

Having blattered forth his revilings till he was tired, our holy champion draws a little nearer: affirming, that some men in these perilous times, not daring to teach openly that God is the cause of evils, intimate the same thing, in varied forms of speech; asserting, that Adam sinned by the will of God; and that wicked men perpetrate all their wickednesses not only by the *permission* of God, but by his actual *impulse.* Upon this, our noble rhetorician exclaims with great lamentation, 'O miserable man!—How could it have been that GOD willed this, who had created Adam in his own image.'—As if it were mine to render an exact *reason* for the secret counsels of God, and to make mortals understand, to a pin's point, that heavenly wisdom, the height and depth of which, they are commanded to look upon, and adore. No! let Moses rather break short all such foolish loquacity, by that word of his, "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but these which I testify are revealed unto you." (Deut. xxix. 29.) We here see how Moses, commanding the people to be content with the doctrine of the law, admonishes them to leave his *hidden counsels* to God alone, as mysteries to be adored, not to be inquired into.

Here, finding the point of his pen to have become somewhat bent and blunt, he sharpens it anew, for a furious attack upon those who (according to his own account), assert, that wickednesses are perpetrated, not only by the *will* of God, but by his very *impulse.* Finding himself now entered into a boundless field, he exults and raves, leaving no kind of abuse whatever unuttered, that he might distress the minds of godly ministers; whose virtues, I would to God, he could imitate, even in

a hundredth degree.—He first of all classes them with the libertines: from whom, if *he* differed in the least degree, in *principle*, he certainly would ruin this best of all causes by his *sheer ignorance*. Now as there exists a book of Calvin, expressly written against these libertines, what kind of a face must that man possess, who returns, for a labour so useful and holy, so undeserved a reward?—He positively contends, that if God does impel men to sin, the devil himself does no more. Suppose we concede, for a moment, this profane comparison;—what will our hero say about the servants of Christ; upon whom, the *devil* wages war, ever; but God, never?—But let us see upon what arguments this profane being rests his profanity.—'Let Satan (saith he) do what he will, and tempt as he will, he cannot *compel* the *will* of man. But God, who holds the heart of man in his hand, *can* compel the will. If therefore God *will force;* do so, He will, and must; whether *you* will or no.' Here, the ignorance, and its audacity, are at once manifest.

Now, all men of a sound mind are agreed, that there is no sin but that which is *voluntary*. Wherefore, you will not find one of a sound judgment who will assert, that men sin *against* their will. But Calvin, according to the Word of God, following also Augustine, and other godly writers, teaches, that when men sin, of their own will and accord, God, nevertheless, gives into the hands of Satan, "strong delusions," that he may drive the reprobate hither and thither; as Paul testifies. (2 Thess. ii. 11.)—Satan, in this manner, goes forth, at the command of God, to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets to deceive Ahab. (1 Kings xxii. 21.) But it is not my purpose here to accumulate testimonies from the Scripture. My present object is, merely to show, how preposterously this barking dog howls against the innocent. 'How (saith he) is a wicked man known to be such, but by doing wickedly?'—As if we, by attributing to the secret judgments of God, all the license which He puts into the

hands of Satan, thereby make the adorable God the author of sin! As if we did not, on the contrary, openly and universally testify, that God is, and must be, ever utterly remote from sin; *because* (as we show) it is in the *strictest justice*, and *righteousness*, that He blinds and hardens the reprobate! '—But in this way (argues this hero for God) the will of God and of the devil will be the same.' —Not so. There is, as I have before shown, a mighty difference: because, although God and the devil *will* the *same thing:* they do so in an utterly *different manner.* For who will deny that Satan eagerly desires the destruction of the wicked? which destruction, nevertheless, proceeds from God? Yet the *object* of the righteous JUDGE, is infinitely different from that of the *Enemy*, breathing out unmitigated cruelty!—God *willed* that Jerusalem should be destroyed utterly: the same destruction Satan also desired. I would rather untie this sacred knot, however, by the words of Augustine, than by my own; who, in his "Manual" against Laurentius (chap. ci.), nobly discusses the question,—*how it is*, that man *wills*, with an *evil will*, that which God *wills* with a *good will:* (as where a wicked son, for instance, *wills* the death of his father; and God *wills* the same death;)—and finally, *how it is*, that God performs that which He has decreed by the *wicked wills* and passions of men; rather than by the *good wills* of his own servants.—I refer my readers to the exposition of the sacred matter, as given by Augustine in the portion of his works to which I have alluded.

If then, a diversity of *end* prevents not the *will* from being the *same*, would it not have been according to his desert, if this champion for God had been swallowed up in the deeps of hell, before he had thus defiled the Divine Majesty and polluted it by his foul cavils? And yet, he dares to charge us with denying, in our hearts, *that justice* of God, which we profess with our mouths! Whereas, this vile being himself, while he dares, with unbridled insolence, to assert, that those, against whom he wars,

never study uprightness of life; so indulges himself in all iniquity, as if there sat no JUDGE upon the throne of heaven, at all! But I would calmly ask,—In which breast is it the more probable that the righteousness of God is made a laughing-stock?—in the breast, in which all desire after godliness is found, or that, in which the rein is given to every species of iniquity? The real fact is, that there is no one thing, in Calvin, and in those like him, which this goodly teacher of morality more thoroughly hates, than the *unswerving rigour* of their *moral discipline!*

Insipid, however, and unlettered as this worthless mortal is, he yet attempts to enlist, in his base service, the most scurrilous wit. Demanding, 'whether it was God that rather willed the sin of Adam, or Satan?'—Did ever godly or really serious men permit themselves to be facetious, or pass jokes, upon mysteries so profound; nay, to bark at them as impudent dogs? They do indeed confess, that the fall of Adam was not *without* the rule and over-rule, of the secret providence of God; but they never doubt that the *end* and *object* of his secret counsel were righteous and just. But as the *reason* lies hidden in the mind of God, they soberly and reverently await the revelation of it: which shall be made in the day, in which we shall see that God, "face to face;" whom we now "behold, through a glass darkly," and unintelligibly.—Having thus revelled in the vilest abuse of the best and most godly of men; the next thing that this pious warrior would *have done* is, that all their tongues should be wrenched out, and thrown into the fire!

There is no slight probability, however, that the rage of this being against Calvin is all intended as a holy offering to the memory of his friend, Servetus; and that, lamenting the death of his kin companion, and finding no other method of satisfying his revenge, he surpasses all hangmen, in cruelty towards the defenders of the truth. Concerning the doctrine of the *twofold will* of God which Calvin, following Augustine and other godly teachers,

ascribes to God himself; this excellent theological judge declares, that he wonders at the childish babble by which it is set forth. Every one must, surely, set *him* down as one of the most learned of men, who can talk about "the childish babble" of another! But this offensive affectation fully proves, that he thus prates, under a panting hunt after vain glory. And he afterwards adds, 'that this distinction,—the *twofold will* of God, was *invented* by *us;* because without it, we should have laid ourselves open to the charge of blaspheming God.' Whereas, by this one word of his, his own phrenzied madness is expressed and exposed: for he forgets, that he himself has perpetually upbraided the most innocent men with uttering open blasphemies. And was it (I pray you) any doubtful blasphemy, in himself, when he made God the author of sin; and asserted that He not only wills sin, but actually impels men to sin; thus representing Him, as renouncing his own nature, and feasting upon, and delighting himself in, iniquities? And after having impudently vomited forth these revilings; he now, forgetting himself altogether, and what he has uttered, says, that we cover over our blasphemies with a certain colouring, that they might not be perceived.

It is worth while, however, to observe, what *arguments* he adduces, in his attempted refutation of *the twofold will* of God.—He accuses us of attributing, by this doctrine, *unfaithfulness* to God; as making Him say one thing and think another; contrary to the testimonies of the Scripture; wherein God says, "I am the Lord I change not." (Mal. iii. 6.) "With Him is no variableness." (James i. 17.) But this silly mortal considers not, that it is not Calvin only, and other like witnesses of the truth, who are attacked by this calumny, but Moses himself: who, when declaring that the Law was given unto the Jews, and to their children, leaves all "hidden things" with God, saying that they "belong" to Him. (Deut. xxix. 29.) Not that there is any difficulty whatever in refuting this

calumny. For God, commanding that which is right, thereby testifies what truly pleases Him: nor is there any other counsel concealed in his own mind, by which He either loves, or wills to accomplish, anything whatever that He condemns, in man. But He exercises his judgments in a marvellous way; so that, by his surpassing wisdom and equity, He ordains and directs to a *good end*, things that are, in themselves, *evil*. Nor will Calvin ever concede, that God *wills* that which is *evil;* (that is, in as far as it is evil;) but that his secret and righteous judgments shine forth marvellously in *overruling* the iniquities of men. For instance; by the incestuous deeds of Absalom, God punishes the adultery of David. Wherefore, when God commands Adam not to taste the fruit of the "tree of knowledge of good and evil;" He thereby tests his obedience. Meanwhile, He *foreknew* what would take place; and not only *foreknew* it, but *ordained* it. If this truth be too hard and rough for the palate of our delicate theological judge, let him not blame the savour of the doctrine, but his own acerbity and disrelish. And when he attempts to thump into our hearts with all the weight of his iron mallet, wielded by his ponderous words, that the *will of God* is *one* only, which He reveals unto us by his prophets and by Christ; Augustine, by the force of his authority wards off all the blows of his maul.—"These (saith the holy father) are the mighty works of the Lord! exquisitely perfect in every point of his will; and so wisely perfect, that when the angelic and the human natures had sinned; that is, had each done, not what *God willed*, but what *each nature willed;* though each nature did that which was *contrary* to the will of God in one sense; yet God, by the same *will* of each nature, accomplished that which He *willed* righteously; using, as the Supreme Good, even *evil* deeds, to the eternal *condemnation* of those whom He had justly *predestinated* to everlasting *punishment;* and to the eternal *salvation* of those whom He had *predestinated* unto *grace*. For as far as the

former were themselves concerned, *they* did that which God *willed not;* but with reference to the *Omnipotence of God,* which could thus bring good out of evil, they could not by any means have willed to do it, *independently* of that Omnipotence. For by the very fact of *their* acting *contrary* to the will of God; by that very acting, the *will of God* was *done,* through them. For in this very omnipotent way of working, consists the mightiness of the works of God! So that, by an inexplicable manner of operation, *that* is not done *without* the will of God, which is, in itself, even *contrary* to his will; because, *without* his will, it could not have been done at all. And yet, God willeth not unwillingly, but willingly. For as the *God of Goodness,* He would not suffer evil to be done at all; unless, as the *God of Omnipotence,* He could, out of that evil, bring good!"

Wherefore, let this worthless being hurl all those horrible heresies and blasphemies, which he thus directs against the most godly ministers of our day, at the head of the eminent Augustine himself. It is indeed perfectly true, that the will of God is to be sought for nowhere, but in the Scripture. But while this gross hog is rooting up everything with his snout, he does not consider, that, though reverence and sobriety are ever cultivated by the faithful; yet, the *secret judgments* of God cannot be *done away with,* or reduced to nothing! But it is one thing to contemplate and adore that "great deep" (Ps. xxxvi. 6), with all the modesty of faith: and quite another, to reject it with contumacy, *because* it at once engulphs all the powers of the human mind, which attempts its comprehension. This vile mortal, however, in order that he might do away with all those testimonies of the Scripture, instructed by which, we assert the wonderful and glorious *Providence* of God, contents himself with broadly declaring, that all we heretics have ever abused piety, making it a mere cloak; and have, under the name of God, originated every kind of evil. Why, if this round assertion is to be

deemed sufficient to settle the whole matter; the same may as well be admitted as competent to disprove all heavenly doctrine, and to obliterate the name of God altogether.

This worthless being afterwards adds, 'that he can answer every argument which we may bring against him, in *two ways*. By showing, *first*, that all those passages which seem to attribute the cause of evil to God, do not intend his *effectual* will, but his *permitting*, or, his *leaving* a thing to be done.'—But away with that calumny altogether, which is built upon the terms *good* and *evil*, when used in discussing God's eternal will and decrees. For we well know, that nothing is more contrary to the nature of God, than sin. But men act from their own proper wickedness, when they sin: so that, the whole fault rests with themselves. But to turn all those passages of the Scripture, (wherein the affection of mind, in the *act*, is distinctly described,) into a mere *permission* on the part of God, is a frivolous subterfuge; and a vain attempt at escape from the mighty truth! The fathers, however, did interpret these passages by the term *permission*. For finding that the apparent asperity of the more direct terms gave offence to some, at first hearing; they became anxious to mitigate them by milder expressions. In their too great anxiety, however, thus to mitigate; and in their study to avoid giving any such offence; they relaxed something of that fixedness of attention which was due to the great truth itself.

This worthless being, however, who professes to be so familiar with the fathers, betrays his utter ignorance of their real minds. For seizing hold of those instances of inexperience in Augustine which I have already alluded to, as being found in his writings, while he was, as yet, not deeply versed in the Scripture; he passes over all those plain and powerful passages, wherein he acknowleges the secret judgments of God, in their *real* and *actual* operations (if I may so express myself) of *blinding*

and *hardening* the reprobate.—The same ignorance and unletteredness is manifested also by this vain being, when he tells us, on the authority of Hieronymus, 'that when God is spoken of as doing or creating *evils*, the expressions are *figurative*.'—But if "evils" are nothing more or less than *adversities*, (as is perfectly well known and universally acknowledged,) why hunt after a *figure*, in things which are, in themselves, perfectly manifest and plain?

But let us look into the doctrine of *permission* a little more closely, yet briefly.—Joseph is wickedly sold by his brethren. Joseph himself declares, that he was sent into Egypt *by God*, through *the means* of this wickedness; not *by his brethren*, who *perpetrated* it; and he declares, that all this was done, by the *counsel of God*, that the family of his father might be nourished and kept alive. Now, is all this, I pray you, *mere permission?* Job also testifies, that it was God who took away from him all that substance of which the robbers and plunderers had despoiled him! Does God's "taking away," I pray you, declare no *act*, on the part of God? God is said to have turned the hearts of the Gentiles to hate his people. Shall we say that this was a *mere permission* on the part of God? The Scripture itself expresses the "turning" as a positive and open *act* of God. So, when God is said to *deliver men over* "to a reprobate mind," and to *give them up* "to vile affections," there cannot exist a doubt that those *acts* of his awful judgments are thereby declared, by which He takes righteous vengeance on the reprobate! If God were merely an inactive looker-on, while these mighty judgments were being effected, and merely *permitted* them to be executed, would He, by such mere permission of an observer, really execute the office of a JUDGE? God calls Nebuchadnezzar the "axe in his hand" (Isa. x. 5): He terms also the Assyrians the "staff of his indignation:" all wicked men He designates his "rod:" and He positively declares, that by means of these, He

will do what He hath *decreed to do.*—What place will mere *permission* find, here? Jeremiah, addressing the Medes, exclaims, "Cursed be he that doeth the *work* of the *Lord* deceitfully: and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood." (Jer. xlviii. 10.) Behold! what cruelty soever these bloody men commit, the prophet, in another sense, calls the *work* of *God:* because God, by their hand, executed his vengeance on the Babylonians. David, in like manner, testifies, that what evil soever he was suffering, it was God that did it: and that, therefore, He was "dumb." (Ps. xxxix. 9.) Now, by what *figures* or *tropes*, I pray you, will any man convert the term "*didst* it" into *permittedst* it, or make the *doing* a thing, merely the *permitting* it to be done?—Paul likewise declares, that it is God who 'sends upon the wicked strong delusions that they should believe a lie.' (2 Thess. ii. 11.) Where therefore, the "effectual working" (Ephes. iii. 7) of God appears manifest, as it does here; by what alchemy or contrivance, will any one extract from such "effectual working" the Divine *will* and *purpose?*

This pre-eminent theological teacher and judge prescribes, as a canon, for the interpretation of such passages as, "Thou art not a God that hast pleasure in wickedness," (Ps. v. 4) that all those should be considered, as intended by that text, who seem to attribute evil to God. But what has this at all to do with the present question? No spot of iniquity is affixed by us on God. All we affirm is quite the reverse. All we maintain, throughout our arguments is, that God *rules* and *overrules* all the actions of the world, with perfect and Divine rectitude. If any one of us sundered the *power* of God from his *justice;* then indeed we should lay ourselves justly open to the tacit censure of those who continually and reproachfully repeat to us, 'that there is nothing more contrary to the *power* of God, than tyranny.' But now, while we make Him "to have no pleasure in wickedness;" is He, under this pretext, to be torn from his throne, as the Judge of the world, and as

having no *Omnipotence* whereby to work *good*, by means of *evil* men, and their *evil* deeds? For the fact is, that, as God frequently works out his judgments, by the hands of the wicked; whosoever shall confine Him within the bounds of *permission*, will at once expel him from his office, as JUDGE of the world!—The sons of Eli had evilly and disgracefully abused their priestly office: and they perished by the hand of the Philistines. Now by the *canon* of our great theologian, we must interpret this, as meaning, that all was done by the *permission* of God. But what saith the Scripture?—that all was done, because God had *purposed* to destroy them. Just observe to what *extent* of madness, all madmen are driven by their madness, where there is no religion, no modesty, no shame, to stop them. They rush on, till they bring not only men, but God also, under subjection to their phrenzied fictions.

But as it would be utterly absurd to hold, that anything could be done *contrary* to the will of God; seeing that God is at Divine liberty to prevent that which He does not will to be done;—how ingenious a workman this being is, in getting rid of this argument, which stands against him, let us now, in a few words, explain. He first of all asserts, that it is ridiculous to inquire into this, at all. What a pity it was, that Augustine had not such a monitor by his side, to save him all the holy labour, which he spent upon this great question! and by which labour, (according to our theological hero,) he made himself 'perfectly ridiculous'! Whereas, Augustine proves, by this very argument, that everything that is done on earth, is effectually ruled, and overruled, by this *secret providence* of God! Nor does he hesitate to conclude, that everything that is done, is done by the WILL OF GOD! According to which conclusion, the Psalmist testifies, that God, sitting in heaven, doth what He will, "But our God, (saith the Psalmist,) is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased." (Ps. cxv. 3.) But *why*, I pray

you, is this question a *ridiculous* one? Our great theological monitor replies—"Because, it is not lawful to ask of God *a reason* for his actions." Why does not our modest monitor, then, retain this great modesty, throughout his treatment of this mighty matter? Whence arise, then, this modest being's furious clamours and tumults? Whence, but from the fact, that the proud and ignorant reject, with hatred and disdain, the counsels of God? *because*, forsooth, their puny minds cannot grasp their profundity and immensity!—Leave, then, to God, the LIBERTY to order all things according to his own WILL, and all strife about the matter, will end, at once. But it is just and right, that madmen should be left thus to contend one with the other; that they may put an end to each other, by a mutual destruction.

Here we are brought back to the old point of vain defence, resorted to by our theological hero;—'that many things *are done*, *contrary* to the will of God.' This we most willingly grant: provided, that this *contrary* to the will of God, be not carried too far. God, for instance, often willed to call the Jews together, 'but *they* would not:' though He called them to himself, by his prophets, "rising up early;" as He himself forcibly expresses it. (Jer. vii. 13.) But as conversion is God's peculiar gift; He converts himself, *effectually*, those whom He *wills* to be converted, in *reality*.—In what sense it is, that Paul says, "God will have all men to be saved" (1 Tim. ii. 4), let readers, as we have before observed and explained, learn from the context. There are different degrees and kinds of salvation (as we have shown above, when opening this passage). But God does not deem *all men* (as we have before shown from the history of the world, and from the few nations, to whom God sent, even his *external* word) worthy of the external word: and they are few, whom He makes the partakers of his *secret* illumination.

But to extricate himself the more easily from his perplexity, this unworthy mortal finally catches up, for his

defence, the shield of *free-will.*—He says, 'that there is no wonder whatever, in God's *not preventing* men from doing evil, who have the *free-will* to do what they please.' Whereas, *that is* the mighty wonder! And it is resolvable only by the sublime truth, and its doctrine, that, whatsoever men do, they do *according to the* ETERNAL WILL, *and* SECRET PURPOSE, of God!—But why does this vain being thrust upon us a *term*, fabricated out of nothing? What is *free-will?* when the Scripture everywhere declares, that man, being the captive, the servant, and the slave of the devil, is carried away into wickedness of every kind, with his *whole mind* and *inclination;* being utterly incapable of *understanding* the things of God, much less of *doing* them?

In this refutation of dog-faced dishonesty, as the OMNIPOTENCE of God is honestly and clearly maintained, against calumnies of every kind; I feel confident, that I have humbly performed a work, both useful and gratifying to the Church; and, also, acceptable unto God.

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